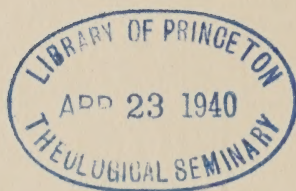


ISRAEL *in the*  
DECLINE *of the* WEST

---

*Harry Infeld*



DS 113 .I5 1940  
Infeld, Herman Zvi, 1899-  
Israel in The decline of the  
West

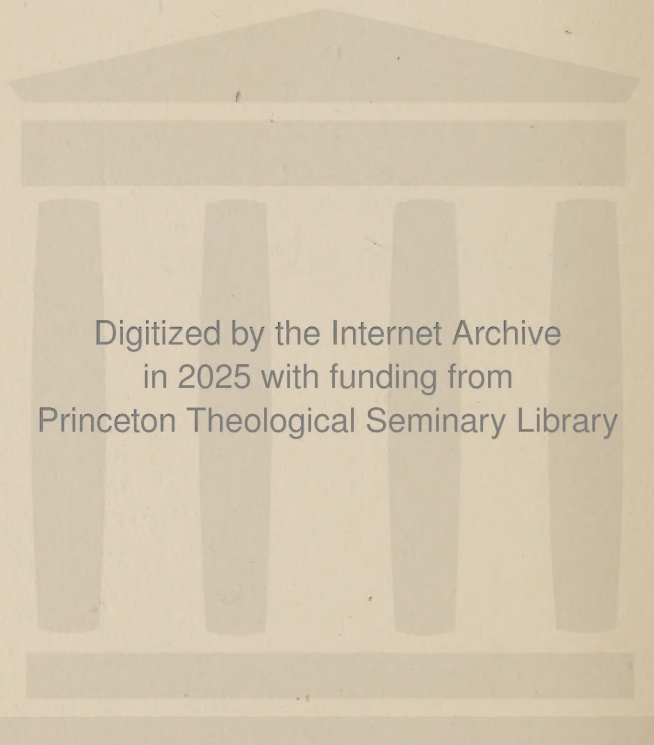








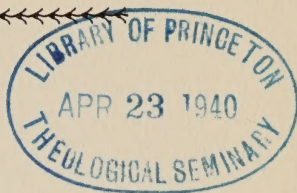
ISRAEL *in the*  
DECLINE OF THE WEST



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2025 with funding from  
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

ISRAEL *in the*  
DECLINE OF THE WEST

---



BY

*Harry Infeld*



---

NEW YORK  
BLOCH PUBLISHING COMPANY  
"The Jewish Book Concern"  
1940



Copyright, 1940, by  
HARRY INFELD

*Printed in the United States of America*

DEDICATED  
TO  
NORMAN LOURIE  
IN APPRECIATION





## CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	I
Methods of historical science — Instability of scientific theories — Abuse of history — Can the validity of historical theories be testified? — Scope of the book.	
II. SPENGLER'S HISTORICAL MORPHOLOGY . . . . .	9
Traditional scheme of World History overthrown — What is Culture? — Culture's predestined life-course — The transformation of Culture into Civilization — Rationalistic mysticism and the "Second Religiousness."	
III. CRITICISM OF SPENGLER'S THEORY . . . . .	20
Culture is an organism — Does Culture create nations? — Cultural development may be accelerated — Historical Pseudo-morphosis — Russia and the West — Is death an inescapable fate of all Civilizations? — Can Western Civilization be saved?	
IV. SPENGLER'S CONCEPTION OF JUDAISM . . . . .	43
Judaism integral part of Magian Culture — Genuine Jewish nation arises in Babylon and not in Palestine — Judea and Babylon — Parties within Palestinian Judaism — Christianity heralding the awakening of Magian Culture	

— Youth and maturity of Jewish nation —  
 Mohammed heralds Islamic Reformation —  
 — Karaism a Jewish movement of Reformation —  
 Spiritual extinction of Judaism — The  
 Jews in the orbit of Western Culture — Dis-  
 integration of Ghetto Judaism — The Jews in  
 the Western World are fated to disappear.

## V. ISRAEL'S CULTURAL CHARACTER . . . 63

Divergence of opinions with regard to Israel's  
 cultural character — Intuitive and scientific  
 interpretation of Israel's Culture — The proph-  
 etic nature of Israel — Jahweh the Lord of  
 History — Why Israel did not produce plastic  
 art — Jahweh is one and incorporeal — Proph-  
 ets are not fortune-tellers.

## VI. ISRAEL'S LIFE-COURSE . . . . . 79

Israel's genesis — The conquest of Canaan —  
 Israel's awakening — The influence of Egyp-  
 tian Monotheism — Israel's Youth (Debo-  
 rah; Samuel; Elijah) — Israel's maturity (The  
 "grand masters" of Israel's prophetism) —  
 Transition to Israel's Civilization (Judaism).

## VII. JUDAISM — ISRAEL'S CIVILIZATION . . . 102

Culture and Civilization — Deuteronomic Ref-  
 ormation signifies the rise of Israel's city  
 spirituality — The return of Babylonian exiles  
 saved Judaism — Mechanization of Israel's  
 Religion (Ezra and the Scribes) — Jewish  
 Wisdom-literature — Job the Nihilist — Eccle-  
 siastes symbolizes Israel's spiritual weariness —  
 Jewish rationalistic mysticism (apocalyptists)  
 — Literary mass production void of inner sig-  
 nificance.

# VIII. CHRISTIANITY — ISRAEL'S "SECOND RELIGIOUSNESS" . . . . . 124

Spengler's characterization of Second Religiousness — Were the Jews indifferent to national language and fatherland? — Christianity and Judaism — The megalopolitan character of Paul's Christianity — The transformation of Hellenistic Christianity into Church and the absorption of Jewish Christians in the Synagogue.

# IX. THE JEWISH MODERN STATE . . . . . 145

Political and economic development of Civilizations — The Deuteronomic Reformation heralds the rise of Israel's bourgeoisie — Ezra conceives constitutional theocracy — In absence of Money the character of Jewish Democracy is determined by Spirit — The belated rise of Money Power within Judaism — The Jewish bourgeois revolution (Hasmonean revolt) — The re-shuffling of political forces (the democratic Pharisees and conservative Sadducees, backed by the army) — John Hyrcanus' *coup d'état* — Rome checks the imperialistic tendency within Judaism.

# X. PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS AND FASCISM WITHIN JUDAISM . . . . . 164

The period of upheavals and revolutions — Economic conditions of Palestine — The rise of the Fourth Estate — Herod establishes Fascist Dictatorship — His government based on private army and secret police — Herod's foreign policy — Herod's death fatal to the Jewish state — Chaos and anarchy follow — Pharisaic pacifists renounce force politics and



are swept away by proletarian masses — Senseless wars and self-annihilation — Jews transformed into Fellaheen (Ghetto Jews).

## XI. GHETTO JEWS — A “PEOPLE OF FELLAHEEN” . . . . . 183

Jewish Ghetto life since the second century C.E. is timeless — Instinctual forces are extinct but intellectual activity continues — Ghetto Jews are politically insignificant — The social structure of Ghetto Jews is unchangeable — Economically they are dependent on external factors — Rabbinism, Kabala, and Messianism are manifestations of spiritual Ghetto life — Hassidism analogous to Christianity — The external influences on Ghetto life.

## XII. JUDAISM AND ALIEN CIVILIZATIONS 204

Relationship between “young” and “old” Civilizations — The impact of alien civilizations (Greek, Arabian, and Western) on Judaism produce identical results — Modern anti-Semitism arises in all periods of assimilation — The three phases of Jewish assimilation — Jews in the Hellenistic world — The transformation of Ghetto Jews under the impact of Arabian Civilization — Karaism analogous to contemporary Jewish Orthodoxy; identical in origin and character — The parallel development of modern Hebrew poetry in the Islamic and Western worlds — Karaites are not related to Sadducees — The “Spiritual Centre” of Judaism shifting from place to place is a fiction — The spiritual life of modern Jews decays in sympathy with the decline of alien civilizations.

XIII. TENDENCIES IN CONTEMPORARY JU-  
DAISM . . . . . 238

The "miracle" of Jewish survival scientifically explained — The economic structure of World Jewry — Jews are "parasites" because others covet their "parasitic" occupations — The economic situation of Jews has never been more critical — The elimination of the middle class from modern economic life and the Jews — Economic fate of Jews compared to that of Britain — Can the Jewish economic problem be solved? — Modern anti-Semitism, past and present — Zionism — The intellectual activities of Jews decline in sympathy with the decline of Western Civilization — Conclusion.





## I. INTRODUCTION

Innumerable books, pamphlets, and essays have been written, and speeches delivered on the subject of Israel's fate, but very few of them have approached the matter in a serious, scientific spirit. From time immemorial, Israel's history has been outraged by anti-Semites for the purpose of extracting from it justification for their blind hatred of everything Jewish. Jewish spiritual and political leaders have on the other hand continually exploited Jewish history in order to burn incense at the shrine of national or religious vainglory, and to inspire their flocks with enthusiasm for diverse sectarian and political aims.

"We Jews are as a race indestructible; we have witnessed the extinction of nations and great empires; two thousand years of dispersion and inhuman persecution have not succeeded in impairing our national vigor; are we not a Chosen People sheltered under a mysterious cloak of protection and charged with a divine mission?"

Declamations of this kind are heard on every possible occasion and they invariably meet with frantic applause, not because of the truth contained in them, but because in these flattering words the listeners find compensation for the degrading moral circumstances in which they actually live. The more degrading and critical the conditions, the more vociferous are Jewish preachers and propagandists; the more ignorant and naive the audience, the more frantic is its applause. Ignorance and lack of courage to face

reality find a convenient refuge in the nebulous realms of mystery.

If we want to understand the historical fate and destiny of Israel, it is incumbent upon us to detach ourselves from our subjective interests and to approach Jewish history in a truly scientific spirit. Only thus shall we be able to dispel the mist which enshrouds the many problems confronting present world Jewry.

The methods to be applied to history in general should be similar to those applied to any branch of science. True, phenomena of human history are not as amenable to exact scientific methods as the phenomena, say, of physics. Apparently imponderable factors of individual and mass psychology, which interfere with historical events, and the impossibility of performing experiments in a laboratory in order to verify historical theories, make the study of history appear unscientific. And yet, not many would venture to dismiss this study as a futile occupation. It is especially today, when human life in all its aspects finds itself in an almost hopeless confusion, that an understanding of the various economic, political, and social phenomena of our life from an objective historical perspective is all the more vital. Absolute truth is perhaps inaccessible to us, but for that matter even exact and highly developed sciences, such as physics and astronomy, are not in a much more privileged position.

Science may be defined as systematically organized knowledge. This definition makes it clear that the first stage in the development of any science must necessarily be the accumulation of facts. When all available facts have been collected and classified, the next stage is to try and bring them all within the scope of a general hypothetical theory. A theory is accepted as true when it succeeds in

co-relating and interpreting all known facts in any particular branch of science.

In the course of development, new facts may be found or phenomena observed which are inconsistent with the previously accepted theory. If this happens, the conservative scientist attempts to ignore the new facts or to distort them in such a way as to make them fit into orthodox teachings, whereas the progressive scientist works on a new theory which may cover the new facts and observations as well as the old. If he succeeds in his efforts, the old theory becomes untenable and eventually the new one finds general acceptance.

Let us illustrate the development of science by the history of astronomy. The Ptolemaic theory which taught that our earth was fixed in the centre of the universe, consisting of nine transparent spheres revolving at different speeds, was generally accepted until the sixteenth century, when Copernicus taught that it was the earth that moved and not the sun and stars. As a matter of fact, the Copernican theory was superfluous, because all facts known at that time were equally well covered by the Ptolemaic theory. The orthodox astronomers were therefore justified in rejecting it. But when Galileo, in 1609, directed his newly invented telescope towards Jupiter and discovered small moons revolving around it, a fact which could not be explained by the Ptolemaic theory, whereas the Copernican covered it satisfactorily, the latter gained general acceptance, though not until after a long and bitter struggle with the conservatives. Half a century later, Newton propounded the theory of gravitation, which explained yet newer and more precise facts which were inconsistent with the Copernican theory. The Newtonian theory in turn dominated physical sci-

ence until new facts had been accumulated which threw doubt upon it. Particularly was it the irregular motion of Mercury which caused scientists a great deal of trouble until, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Einstein propounded a new hypothesis, the theory of relativity, which not only explained all the phenomena which Newton's theory of gravitation had previously covered, but also gave an accurate account of the motion of Mercury and explained a great number of other scientific phenomena as well.

This instability is sometimes used as an argument against the validity of all scientific theories. But that very susceptibility to change is merely a sign of progress. Nature and Life appear to be governed by certain immutable laws, and the aim of science is to discover and interpret these laws. Science, mindful of its limitations, forms hypotheses the relative truth of which is attested only by the extent to which they may be found workable. No absolute truth is claimed.

When two separate and conflicting theories are in the field, and both of them satisfy all requirements, as was the case with the Ptolemaic and Copernican theories, then we have either to wait for new facts to decide between the two, or else we must perform appropriate experiments in order to find out which of them is true. This is so because a hypothesis may be tested not only by known facts, but also and even more by its ability to forecast certain events which may be expected to occur provided that the conceived theory is true. If one hypothesis predicts that a certain event will take place while the opposing one refuses such a possibility, then if the predicted event does really occur, the former hypothesis is considered to be true, whereas the latter is destined to disappear.



The value of science is twofold, intellectual and utilitarian. It satisfies our intellectual urge to understand Nature and Life and to co-relate all experiences and observed phenomena. The intellectual confusion prevailing today is due to the fact that we have not yet learned to co-ordinate our experiences and to bring them into a logical system, which, is, as Einstein says, the object of all science. The utilitarian value of science is based chiefly on the ability of scientists to predict events or to produce desired phenomena experimentally, in accordance with the discovered laws of Nature and Life. The achievements of scientists who have explored the realms of physical nature have been of tremendous interest and value. The highly developed modern technique is due to them.

Are such achievements possible in the field of human nature? Yes, they are, provided that scientific methods are adopted and applied also to sciences such as history, psychology, sociology, and economics, which deal with human nature. These branches of science are today as much interrelated as are mathematics, astronomy, physics, and chemistry. Furthermore, just as mathematics today governs all the sciences which deal with physical nature, so is history destined to become the foundation of all sciences which deal with human nature. Scientifically developed and widely disseminated historical knowledge may play as decisive a role in the regulation of human affairs for the good of mankind as the physical sciences have played in the development of industry. Hitherto, history has too often been prostituted. How many crimes, senseless butcheries, have been committed in the name of religious, racial, political, and economic ideals, to all of which history has been forced to supply support?

Such an abuse of history could in the future be avoided



by adopting scientific methods in historical research. The aim of history, as the science of human life in all its aspects, should be to discover and interpret the laws which govern the phenomena of human life in its development. These laws are much more difficult to verify than are the laws which govern physical nature, but the task is not insurmountable. We all feel that historical happenings in human life are as much governed by immutable laws as are physical phenomena themselves. Consequently, if historians had adopted purely scientific methods and had treated historical facts and events without prejudice or bias, they would by now have succeeded in co-ordinating them according to their relative significance and in bringing them into a logical system.

The urge to understand human history has always been alive, and various systems and conceptions of history have always been propounded. The theological conception of history as laid down in the historical books of the Bible and according to which God's will is the governing law of all human happenings, was the first attempt to bring historical events into a system. Today, the best known supposedly scientific system is the materialistic conception of history as propounded by Karl Marx.

A scientific hypothesis is accepted as true when it covers all known facts and if its predictions materialize. With two conflicting hypotheses in the field of physical science, it is sometimes possible, by performing a crucial experiment, to decide between them. In the case of historical hypotheses, on the other hand, it is impossible to carry out such experiments. We may, however, test the validity of a hypothesis even of this kind by examining whether extended facts and new events can be covered by the proposed general principle or explanation, or, in other words,

whether historical events predicted by a certain theory have materialized.

For instance, Marx predicted the collapse of Capitalism. Recent events are in accordance with this prediction. On the other hand, the fact that the first Social Revolution took place in Russia, that is to say, in a most backward country, seems to contradict Marxism. A scientific Marxian historian would therefore be expected to make a serious study of the new events and to examine whether or not they are consistent with the system expounded by Marx. If he failed to reconcile the two he would have to modify the Marxian conception of history, or replace it by another which would extend to the facts which were unforeseen and not covered by the old system. The orthodox Marxian would certainly fight tooth and nail against any such suggestion, just as the orthodox physicist fought against Einstein's theory of relativity and the conservative psychologist against Freud's psycho-analysis. If, however, the new theory demonstrated beyond doubt its superiority to the old, it would eventually win through.

In the course of our survey, the importance of a scientific study of history will be made abundantly clear. In the past, nations have acted and developed according to certain laws without being conscious of them. They have been guided by inner instinctive forces. Today, for reasons which we shall examine later, instincts have lost their predominating directive force. At this time we have no alternative but to turn to Reason for guidance. We have to resort to scientific analysis and interpretation in order to discover the laws by which our life, as a collective entity, is governed and, conscious of these laws, to shape our destiny accordingly. True, Reason is not yet sufficiently developed and it cannot claim infallibility, but the great

achievements of human reason in the field of technique inspire us with the hope that this human faculty will sooner or later celebrate its victory also in the field of the sciences which deal with human nature, such as sociology, economics, and psychology, with history as the background of them all.

As the title of this book indicates, it is proposed to give a scientific interpretation of Israel's fate in the light of Spengler's conception of history as expounded in the *Untergang des Abendlandes*, or as the English translation has it, *The Decline of the West*. Spengler's historical conception does not find an unqualified acceptance in this book, but it is conceded that in modified form, some of the main principles of his general theory throw a powerful light on many of the mysteries of Israel's historical life and indicate the possibilities of its future development. It is, therefore, proposed to give in the first place a brief outline of Spengler's historical theory. Some of the principal Spenglerian ideas, most relevant to an understanding of Israel's historical fate, will be elaborated in later chapters.

## II. SPENGLER'S HISTORICAL MORPHOLOGY

Spengler overthrows all existing systems of human history and with appalling erudition expounds a new theory which he believes is destined to revolutionize our outlook on human history and our understanding of the present problems of mankind.

According to the traditional scheme, World History falls into three divisions—ancient, mediaeval, and modern. Spengler rejects this scheme as absurd, considering the overwhelming mass of facts which are entirely inconsistent with it. It could have been conceived only by West-Europeans who regard Western civilization as the apex of human history and Europe as the centre of mankind. Such a scheme Spengler calls Ptolemaic and, likening himself to Copernicus, he replaces it with a system which dethrones Europe from her privileged central position and places Western culture on the same footing as other cultures such as the Chinese, Indian, or classical. Just as the earth is only one of the planets revolving round the sun, so is Western Civilization merely one of the several civilizations recorded in human history.

What is History? It is not a record of the past activities of mankind. It consists rather of the unconnected biographies of individual cultures. And what is culture?

According to Spengler, culture is an organism subject to the same fate as every living organism. It is an organic entity which manifests itself in various forms of expres-

sion. We cannot understand its origin but only its character and its history. The true calling of an unprejudiced historian is to reveal the inner make-up of all past and living cultures by an intuitive interpretation of their various forms of expression, and to trace the course of their fateful development. The accumulation of facts and their classification is merely the preliminary work. Facts and dates are only symbols with the aid of which the historian may be enabled to penetrate into the culture's soul and to depict its history. This method of historical research Spengler calls morphological, its aim being to interpret the forms of a culture in such a way as to reveal the inner soul expressed in them. He applies the method in his work and comes to the conclusion that the so-called World History is nothing more nor less than a collection of biographies of cultures standing in a more or less accidental relation to each other. Each of these cultures is complete in itself and works out its destiny alone. It expresses itself not only in art and religion, but also in science, economics, politics, and social life. The inward nature of a culture can be discovered in all these manifestations. Consequently, we have as many arts and religions and even varieties of mathematics and physics as the cultures which have existed. It is absurd to speak of the history of human art, human religion, and so on. There exist only the art, religion, and the rest, of a particular culture, and not of mankind as a whole. It is by reason of their cultural origins that various arts and religions differ fundamentally from one another.

There is no inward inter-relation or inter-action among them. A clash between two cultures may result in a change in the course of development of either or both, but never in mutual assimilation. A culture may adopt



certain forms of expression belonging to another culture, but it will use them to reveal its own soul. Sometimes these foreign forms may be so overwhelmingly predominating that the weaker or younger culture is in danger of becoming impeded in its growth and prevented from finding its own forms of expression. Such a conflict between two cultures Spengler calls "Pseudomorphosis." The struggle of a culture to free itself from Pseudomorphosis is one of the most important events in history.

Thus, mankind divides itself into various independent autonomous cultures. Spengler rejects and ridicules the "Rassentheorie," contending that there are no pure races and that racial origin is of no historical significance. It is not race but culture which moulds the character of peoples and which is responsible for their mode of life and the nature of their history.

Though different in character, all cultures pass through the same stages of development, their life-course extending over almost exactly the same period of time—some fourteen or fifteen hundred years. They run parallel to one another, and if we compare two cultures at the same stage of development we find that there is a profound correspondence between them. Alexander the Great and Napoleon (both belonging to the same period of their respective cultures) are morphologically "contemporaries," though over 2,100 years divide them. Each plays an identical historical role at the same relative time, Alexander in classical and Napoleon in Western culture.

Spengler surveys all recorded cultures, and in a masterly manner depicts their characteristic traits. For our purpose, it is unnecessary to deal with them. The ingenious generalizations and the metaphysical speculations in regard to the inherent differences which distinguish

the several cultures, may be of great interest to scholars of general history, but they are not as important to an understanding of our problem as is Spengler's idea of that standard life-course which is the same for every culture.

What are the several stages through which each culture is fated to pass and what are the characteristic features of each stage?

As a living organism, culture has a history comparable with that of any member of the organic world. Its life-course may be divided into four periods, childhood, youth, maturity, and old age, which represent the stages in life-course of the human being; or into spring, summer, autumn, and winter, which mark the life-course of the plant.

Bearing in mind the development of the human being, we shall find it easy to follow the differences among the four ages of a culture.

In childhood, the individual lives in a dreamland. His conscious life is still latent. He gropes in spiritual darkness and has not yet awakened to the realities of his surroundings.

In youth, the human being awakens. In a hard and desperate struggle with his environment, he gradually shakes off his dreams. He begins to become conscious of himself and to work out his destiny. At this stage the forces at work are still predominantly instinctive; warm blood, emotional impulses are the springs of his creative life. Therefore he is vigorous or even violent, impetuous and over bold. Purely intellectual forces are still latent.

At the age of maturity, the individual is most creative, both the instinctive and intellectual forces being developed but not yet disintegrated to any significant ex-

tent. The intellect, cold reason, has not yet emancipated itself. The springs of intellectual effort are, moreover, intuitive and emotional. The highest point of creative life has been reached.

In old age, the instinctive forces decline and decay. The intellect gradually emancipates itself and develops at the expense of emotional life. Cold reason freezes out warm blood and suppresses instinctive impulses. Reason, in fact, becomes the prevailing force and stamps its imprint on everything. Actions, thoughts, and even feelings undergo a process of disintegration caused by the intellect. This is the end of the individual's development.

As a rule, during old age the suppressed instincts revolt against the tyranny of the intellect, and a sentimental longing for the natural life of the past manifests itself in various ways. Such a period of romanticism is commonly called "second childhood" and is one of the characteristic phenomena of declining old age. It gives an appearance of rejuvenation, of youthful freshness, but it lacks those prime creative forces which characterized the preceding periods.

That is the normal development of an individual, and the life of a culture runs along a parallel course and passes through analogous stages of development.

The childhood or the pre-cultural period of a people is characterized by countless vicissitudes without aim or significance. The tribes wander about as in a dream. They are not yet conscious of themselves and no general principle underlies their existence. This period lasts for about five hundred years.

This a-historic stage of development may, however, be likened to a chrysalis out of which there ultimately emerges the culture which Spengler divides into two

main stages, corresponding to youth and maturity and lasting about five hundred and three hundred years respectively.

In the early epoch, an imaginative mythology arises exalting heroism, so characteristic of youth. In epic and song, the deep world feeling of the culture is expressed. This is the period of Homeric epics in the classical and of the Eddas in the West-European countries. A deep religious fervor animates the people and, in the name of their gods, they fight their enemies with fierce ruthlessness. Moral considerations, in the modern sense of the word, are still alien to them. Warm blood, the impulsive instincts, are the springs of their actions. The real life of the community lies in the countryside and it centres round market places and strongholds. Towns are still few and small. Feudalism is gradually established. The nobles and the priests are the rulers under the over-lordship of the king. Patriarchal forms and tribal traditions disappear and territorial integration takes their place.

In the period of maturity, the culture reaches its climax. It finds its fullest and highest expression. The stage of creative life changes. At first small and then larger towns take the place of market places and strongholds. Great cultures are cultures of towns and not of the countryside where they awake. It is in towns that they gradually mature and reach their highest level among priests and prophets, poets and artists, scientists, diplomats, and captains. Athens, in the classical, and Paris, in Western culture, are the central points of gravitation. Pericles and Louis IV are "contemporaries" in the "morphological" sense. The culture to which each of these rulers belonged matured during the time of his rule. The



art and literature, science and philosophy, and social and political life of the day are in each case stamped with the same imprint of maturity.

Finally comes the period of old age and senility. *Culture transforms itself into Civilization*. The intellect, the cold reason, frees itself from blood, from instinct, and gradually becomes the ruler of the age. The process of disintegration sets in. The intellectual spirit uproots the man from mother earth, from traditions and all blood relations. The foundations of traditional institutions like religion and royal dynasties totter and collapse. The centres of gravitation shift from towns to world cities, from megalopolis into cosmopolis. The cosmopolis, with its formless and shallow life, is symbolic of the times. The market place has developed first into the town of a great culture and finally into the cosmopolis, and there the blood which has run through the past ages gradually becomes congealed. In place of the deeply rooted ideals of the past, we have problems created by the analyzing and dissecting intellect. Everything is problematic, even life itself. Rationalization pervades everything. Instead of true religion, we find scholastic dogmas. Art decays and becomes technique. Customs wither and become fashions. The great ideas concerning life and the world previously expressed in mythology and philosophy now become subjects of rational analysis. The genial rhetoric of prophets and orators turns into superficial journalism. People no longer make history but write and study it. The professor, secluded in his study or lecture room and out of contact with life, takes the place of the prophet and priest of preceding periods.

Man thinks in terms of money instead of goods.



Money, which like intelligence itself is rootless, becomes an irresistible power. Not ideals but economic considerations and interests are the cause of modern wars. In the process of disintegration, political parties, representing organized economic interests, struggle for power and thus give rise to social disorders and revolutions.

Being rootless, the typical modern man becomes a world citizen. He abhors country life or the life of provincial towns. The spirit of cosmopolis expands and gradually saps the vitality and vigor associated with the countryside. Shapeless masses drift into the cities and demand "panem et circenses"—bread and entertainment. Sport, jazz, races, and other forms of excitement and diversion, replace the true joy of life of the past. Rome and Alexandria, with their counterparts in New York and London, are symbolic of a decaying civilization. The world city, this colossus of stone, marks the end of the life-course of every culture. In it the culture becomes rigid, its blood congeals, its forces exhaust themselves, and finally it dies a natural death. The people become intellectual nomads, or, as Spengler calls them, "*Fellaheen*." Being rootless and homeless, they wander about like their tribal forefathers without aim or purpose.

This petrification of culture and mechanization of life are, however, not carried out without a struggle. Blood and instinct resist inhibitions and repressions. There are revolts against rationalism and materialism. These revolts assume various forms. The over-tired intellectual of the cosmopolis turns to rationalistic mysticism. Faith in supernatural forces becomes a fashion. In it the people find relaxation from intellectual tension. In Alexandria and Rome reveling poets and innumerable charlatans and swindlers wandered about, preaching and

agitating not without success for the cult of old Egyptian and Asiatic religions.

In the European-American world we have, by way of counterparts, the occultist and theosophic swindles, American Christian Science, corrupt drawing-room Buddhism, and such-like sentimental nonsense. Some herald these movements as the renaissance of religion, but they are nothing but flirtations with religion, a playful pastime to fill out one's cultural emptiness. Materialism though shallow is at any rate honest, whereas this flirting with religion is not only shallow but dishonest. This then is a culture's second childhood in a corrupt form.

On the other hand, the country folk who have remained naively religious attempt to rebel against the rationalism of the city, by giving birth to a movement which Spengler calls the "Second Religiousness." It appears in all civilizations as soon as their inner life has been completely consummated. Its greatness lies in the deep religiousness of the masses and the simplicity of its expression. It lacks, however, the vitality and the prime forces of the preceding epochs. No new ideas or thoughts are begotten. The "Second Religiousness" is like mist that rises from the land and out of which appear the old forms. It contains the elements of the original religiousness, but differently experienced and expressed. Finally, this "Second Religiousness" too is gradually brought into such rigid forms of organization as congregations, sects, orders, castes, or churches, and transforms itself into what Spengler calls the religion of "Fellaheen," in which the contrast between the religiousness of world cities and that of the provinces disappears. Religion in this final form is, like the general life of world cities, void of historical events. At this stage, centuries are of

no historical significance, whereas previously decades had signified whole epochs. The meaningless ups and downs of superficial changes are, like fashionable changes in art, of no historical import. They testify to the fact that the inner form has been completely finished.

This is the fateful life-course of every culture. Since the beginning of recorded time, six cultures—the Babylonian, Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Classical, and Magian—have passed through all these historical epochs. One—the Maya—which flourished in Mexico, Central America, and Peru, met with a sudden, violent, and slightly premature end at the hands of ignorant Spanish adventurers. Today the Western culture has already been transformed into civilization and is on the decline, whereas in Russia a young culture is still struggling for self-expression.

Spengler gives a general outline of the life-course of these cultures and concludes with the Latin saying, “*Ducunt fata volentem, nolentem trahunt*” (Fate leads the willing; the unwilling it drags). That means that there is no escape from the decrees of fate. Culture, like human beings, takes its predestined course whether we like it or not. Spengler does not preach ordinary pessimism; he wants us to realize our position and the prospects of the future and to act accordingly with courage and determination.

Now, we ask, where does Judaism come into this revolutionary conception of history? Are the facts of Jewish history consistent with it? How does Spengler explain the apparently mysterious phenomena of Jewish life? Should his theory be unable to explain them satisfactorily, it will prove to be untenable and will have to be discarded.

We shall see that Spengler himself gives an entirely

unsatisfactory interpretation of Israel's fate, but that his general theory provides, with certain qualifications, the best key to an intelligent understanding of Israel and Judaism.

### III. CRITICISM OF SPENGLER'S THEORY

Spengler's revolutionary conception of human history has evoked a heated discussion amongst scientists and writers, journalists and politicians. Many regard him as an infallible authority; others ridicule his ideas. In the meantime, Spengler's books exercise a great influence upon the political atmosphere of our times, and his ideas are also being applied or, rather, misapplied to practical politics. In his last book, *Jahre der Entscheidung*, Spengler subjects the present world situation to a sharp analysis, and, in the light of his general conception of history, forecasts the future possibilities of the development of European civilization.

Jewish problems of today are intimately and inextricably bound up with the fate of European civilization. It is therefore imperative to inquire how far Spengler's historical morphology and the forecasts based upon it are consistent with all known facts. An objective discussion on this subject also throws a new light on specific Jewish problems and attunes our historical sense to a better understanding of our past.

Though Spengler's conception of history represents an indivisible whole, it is necessary, for the sake of clarity, to dissect it and to examine each of the component parts separately.

*Culture is an organism.* The problems relating to the genesis of a culture to its specific nature and to the forces which underlie its growth belong to those insoluble



secrets of nature to which the birth and growth of organic life in general belong. This hypothesis, on which Spengler lays the greatest emphasis, is purely metaphysical and therefore disputable. A more scientific approach, which Spengler fanatically abhors, may one day solve these problems. So far, the attempts made in this direction have failed. The materialistic conception of history as expounded by Marx and his disciples is, however, also disappointing as regards the solution of these problems. It is hardly conceivable, for instance, that the forces which determined the cultural character of the Jews in biblical times, in contradistinction to that of the Greeks in Homeric times, were purely economic. Perhaps it is the economic and political fates of the peoples, together with the respective geographical and climatic conditions in which they had to live, that moulded their cultural character. Anyhow, we have so far no reason to dismiss Spengler's metaphysical idea of culture as untenable. We can only ignore it as futile and useless. People, alert to the vital and pressing problems of their generation, have no inclination to indulge in metaphysical speculations of this kind. No harm can be done by leaving these problems open.

Metaphysical in character is also Spengler's second principle deduced from the first. It purports that no nation is the creator of its culture, but that, on the contrary, *culture is the creator of its nations*. Nations do not express themselves in their cultures, but cultures express themselves in and through nations. Since it is metaphysical, we may ignore this principle also. In practice, it makes very little difference whether we say that Greek religion, art, science, and philosophy are forms of expression of classical culture, or that the Greeks expressed

themselves in them. In the latter case, we make the relationship between nations and cultures more intelligible to the ordinary man and avoid confusion. This principle, however, has two important implications which cannot be dismissed offhand. It implies, in the first place, that culture is all-embracing; that politics, methods of warfare, and even the blacksmith's trade, are as much culture as religion, art, and philosophy; that all of them are expressions of a particular culture and therefore exhibit the same inner characteristic traits. This implication does not, however, contradict the alternative conception of the relationship between nations and culture. We may equally well say that the Greeks, who developed a certain cultural character, impressed everything which they did, felt, or thought, with its stamp. The second implication is that nations are without will, mere tools in the hands of that organic entity called culture. This deterministic idea is in accord with the general trend of modern thought, and it will be dealt with further on. At the present stage, it is sufficient to point out that it is reconcilable also with the idea of nations as the creators of their cultures. The character of a nation may be determined by factors over which it has no control. Hence, the nation is not responsible for the forms in which it expresses itself.

More concrete and useful is Spengler's conception of the *life-course of a culture* as divided into strictly defined and limited epochs. It is true that even to this idea Spengler gives a metaphysical character, but its validity can be verified by submitting it to scientific test. In order to become acceptable, it must cover all known historical facts and events. If it is merely a speculative deduction which does not satisfactorily explain all relevant phe-

nomena, then it is untenable. It may be observed that Spengler's theory concerning the life-course of a culture running parallel to that of an individual human being or plant is not new, though it has hitherto only been applied to the life-course of nations and not to that of cultures. In the works of many historians, including Jews like Krochmal and Graetz, up to Bernfeld and Klausner, we find distinct indications that the authors had this general idea in mind; but no historian or philosopher has ever attempted to apply it with such rigorous consistency as Spengler does in his works. He fixes, with absolute precision, the period of time occupied by each epoch for all cultures without exception. This insistence on the rigidity of the duration of all epochs is not justified, though taken generally Spengler may be right in regard to the cultures of the past. We shall see that Israel's life-course conforms to Spengler's general scheme of the life-course of cultures, but the assertion that this division is unchangeable cannot be taken seriously. It seems to be no more true than an assertion that the periods of childhood, youth, maturity, and old age are of exactly the same duration in the case of all human beings, and that these periods are incapable of being shortened or lengthened by external factors. It is obvious that environment, education, and other factors may affect the rate of a person's mental development. More especially is this the case when the rate of development is effected by conscious will and the application of scientific methods. Education and conditions can be deliberately modified in such manner as to speed up or slow down the development. This has been experimentally proved by modern psychology. There is much truth in the theory of "conditioned responses" held by the behaviorists, over-

assuming though this psychological school may be. Why should it be impossible to achieve the same results as regards the growth of a nation? The Russian experiment is a quite conclusive proof of the fact that when the acceleration of cultural development is consciously willed and planned, the achievement of the intended results is assured. The planned acceleration of the economic development of Russia by means of modern industrialization adopted from peoples of Western civilization, the compulsory education in modern science and ideals, and the conscious suppression and sublimation of primitive instincts and impulses—these factors are enabling Russia to compress into a few decades cultural development which has taken other nations centuries. The results being achieved leave no room for doubt. We may therefore conclude that although the several epochs in the development of a culture or nation differ distinctly from one another, yet the lines of demarcation between successive epochs cannot be sharply drawn, and that, furthermore, the duration of each epoch is not unalterably fixed, especially when a short-cut in cultural development is consciously willed.

*A clash between cultures usually results in historical pseudomorphosis.* It is significant that, in order to illustrate this idea, Spengler uses a simile taken not from the organic but from the inorganic world. This fact may indicate that the theory of pseudomorphosis, like that of rigidly fixed epochs, is not quite applicable to the realm of organic life. The simile is very instructive and is here almost literally reproduced:

Imagine a stratum of stone in which crystals of a certain mineral are embedded. The rock cracks and cleaves. Water permeates the fissures and gradually washes the



crystals away so that only their hollow forms remain. Some time later, a volcanic upheaval uproots and breaks the rock, and incandescent lava flows down upon it, cools and solidifies, with the formation of new crystals. These young minerals are, however, not free to assume their own genuine crystalline forms. They have to fill the hollow forms left by the old crystals, and thus give rise to spurious forms or false crystals, the inner structure of which is at variance with their outer forms—a mineral of one class in the guise of a foreign class. Mineralogists call this phenomenon pseudomorphosis.

Cases in which an old alien culture imposes itself on a young native culture so forcibly as not only to prevent it from expressing itself in its own forms, but as also to deprive it of the power of becoming conscious of itself, Spengler calls historical pseudomorphosis. All that springs from the depths of a young cultural soul flows into the hollow forms of an alien civilization; new-born feelings emanating from the hot blood of a pregnant culture, congeal into the petrified forms of an old intelligence. Being thus frustrated in its development, the young culture revolts against the old alien forms and attempts to shake off the constricting fetters.

This idea implies what Spengler positively suggests in other connections, that there is no inter-relation or interaction among cultures. One culture may borrow outward forms, symbols, names, and signs from another culture, but it can never be influenced in its inner life by the other. All talk of the cultural influence exercised by the Babylonians on the Jews, or by the Greeks on the Western peoples, is nonsensical, because no culture can be inwardly modified or affected by another. Aristotle, who is supposed to have exercised so great an influence



on Arabian and Western cultures, is, according to Spengler, of no importance in the history of any culture other than the classical, because none but Greeks could have understood him. The two Aristotles of the Arabian and the European cultures respectively were totally different from the original. The Arabian and Western philosophers interpreted, or rather, misinterpreted, the original Aristotle in the spirit of their respective cultures; and thus he served them merely as a kind of language in which to express ideas and concepts which would have been unintelligible to Aristotle himself.

Spengler may have been unaware of the fact that this argument pricks the bubble of his theory as to the nature of cultures other than his own. It cuts away the ground from under his whole structure of historical morphology. If it is true that the works of one culture are incomprehensible to a member of another culture, how can Spengler claim for himself the competence to interpret foreign cultures? If an Arab or a European cannot but misinterpret the Greek Aristotle, how can Spengler understand him? Has not Spengler also distorted the works of foreign cultures by introducing into them ideas and concepts which would be unintelligible to the authors themselves? The supposition that the contemporary European philosopher is for some metaphysical reason endowed with the power to penetrate into the souls of foreign cultures may be a very convenient subterfuge, but not one which renders the proposition any more acceptable.

The truth of the matter is that Spengler's idea of the unassimilability and impenetrability of a culture is also a purely metaphysical speculation. It entangles us in unnecessary difficulties and contradictions. Moreover, it

does not seem to be consistent with known facts and phenomena of organic life in general. In this connection, reference may be made to the processes of grafting and hybridization. The flowers and fruit of a grafted tree are in quality, texture, and form sometimes intermediate between those of the two kinds of tree employed in the grafting. Hybrid animals and human half-castes usually inherit the characteristics of both parents, that is to say, parents belonging to different species or races. Thus, if cross-breeding is possible in the case of plants, animals, and human beings, why should such a possibility be ruled out in the case of cultures? Why should the only possible results of the contact of two different cultures be rigid pseudomorphosis and the ruthless, uncompromising struggle for exclusive dominance? The character of a nation, like that of a man, is plastic and subject to modification by influences emanating from works of foreign origin. Both are responsive to external stimuli. This does not imply that cultural works are transferable; that the Jews, for instance, could, under the influence of Greek culture, have produced a Homer, or that the Greeks, under the influence of Jewish culture, could have produced the Israelitic prophets. A stereotyped reproduction of cultural works is just as much ruled out as pseudomorphosis itself. The works of Aristotle, as interpreted by Arabs, are undoubtedly different from the original Greek. It is, however, self-evident that Aristotle *did* influence Arabian philosophy not only in its terminology, but also in its methods and substance. Or let us take another instance. The Christianity of the Crusaders was certainly different from the religion of Jesus, which belonged to an alien culture. It is true that the Crusaders were primarily primitive people of an awakening cul-

ture, but to deny Jesus and his religion any formative influence on the character and fate of European peoples would be absurd. Can any objective historian suggest that the character of Western culture has not been modified in any way either by Christianity or by antiquity; that without the two Testaments, or Greek art, philosophy, and literature, the character of European culture and civilization would have been exactly the same?

This modification of the character of a nation or culture, when it is consciously pursued, and when scientific methods are applied, can surely be effected. The interaction between European civilization and Russian culture provides, in this respect, as instructive an illustration as we had when discussing the acceleration of cultural growth.

According to Spengler, Russia began her pseudomorphosis with the founding of St. Petersburg (1703). Russian history, prior to the reign of Peter the Great, was, in the morphological sense, "contemporaneous" with the pre-cultural history of the European peoples. Since Peter the Great, the primitive Russian soul has been forced into the alien forms of Western culture and has thereby undergone historical pseudomorphosis. The Russian soul has been torn in twain. Europe and Asiatic Russia have been engaged in a desperate historical struggle for absolute dominance. Tolstoy, the social reformer, represents the West; Dostoievsky, the saint, represents primitive Russia. Tolstoy is the father of Bolshevism, Dostoievsky the herald of the Russia to come, which will shake off the fetters of Western forms of expression and find genuine forms of her own. What lent the revolution of 1917 its irresistible force was not hatred of the proletariat and intelligentsia of the Europeanized Russian cities, but the

instinctive craving of the townless, primitive *mujik* for his own forms of life, his own religion, and his own history, which drove him to destroy the incomprehensible Western forms that hung like a millstone around Russia. He will in the future annihilate those also who have trapped him into Bolshevism, which in origin and nature is as alien a growth as that capitalistic social life of Russian cities which has already been destroyed. In his book, *Jahre der Entscheidung*, Spengler maintains that "white" Bolshevism is rapidly dwindling away in Russia, and that Asia is gradually recapturing that country, which was annexed by Europe through Peter the Great. The Bolshevik rulers of European type are being replaced by those of more Asiatic and less Western character. The centre of economic life is also shifting more and more towards the east. The Bolsheviks use Marxian doctrines and slogans, consciously or unconsciously, merely as a sort of rationalization of their primitive imperialistic tendencies. With the help of these slogans, and with Asiatic diplomacy, they incite other peoples to revolution in order to prepare the way for Russian conquests.

There is, no doubt, some truth in Spengler's ideas about the Russian revolution. It is true that this revolution cannot be satisfactorily explained in terms of Marxian dialectic, according to which social revolution is to be expected in a country with a highly developed capitalistic system and with a great proletarianized population. In Russia even the feudal system had not yet been sufficiently developed, though some modern capitalistic industries had been grafted upon her. The "revolutionary conditions" which existed in Russia as the outcome of war, famine, and corruption, certainly facilitated the



success of the Russian revolutionaries, but similar conditions also existed in other countries with incomparably stronger socialistic parties, and yet they did not result in the establishment of communism. In explanation of this contradiction of Marxian theory, Trotsky suggests that in a short space of time Russia was pushed through all the stages of social revolution which in the ordinary way require whole generations; and that this was achieved thanks to the courageous and enthusiastic Russian working class, the revolutionary leaders with their uncompromising determination enlightened by precedents in the field of social revolution, the war which armed the masses, and widespread dissatisfaction with existing political, economic, and social conditions. Trotsky does not, however, explain how it was that Russia succeeded in compressing her revolutionary history so far, whereas other countries failed to destroy capitalism even after a struggle lasting generations. If this was because of the compromising policy of the leaders, then how is it that the Russian proletariat managed to get rid of their wavering leaders, while the working classes of other countries, with stronger parties and better education, submitted to the supposedly wrong policy of the leaders; and why were the working classes of Western Europe not as vigorous and courageous as the Russian proletariat? The fact is that the Russian revolution is inexplicable in terms of Marxian dialectics.

Spengler's conception of history gives a much more acceptable explanation of the contradiction. The Russians, being still a primitive people, have not yet lost their impulsive vigor, their innate vitality, their instinctive love of adventure, and their readiness to make sacri-



fices. With ruthless decisiveness and deeply religious fervor, characteristic of all primitive peoples, they have achieved the social revolution. Marx, the Western scientist, became to Russians their Allah, and Lenin his prophet. The Russian revolution is, therefore, by the nature of its driving forces, comparable to the Crusades of Western peoples rather than to the social revolution of civilized countries as envisaged by Marx.

The driving force which ensured the success of the revolution in Russia, is thwarted amongst the devitalized masses and the intellectual leaders of the Megalopolis of the West, and, for lack of vigor and religious faith, they have failed. The shattering defeat of German and Austrian socialists and communists is clearly indicative of the reasons why they were less capable of making revolutionary decisions than the Russian revolutionists. The masses of Spanish workers and peasants who so tenaciously and fanatically fought against Fascist invasion were animated by the mystical spirit of second religiousness rather than driven by forces envisaged by Marx. Spanish anarchism, syndicalism, communism, socialism, and other "isms" among the Loyalists and in part among the rebels, are reminiscent of the multitude of sects and factions arising in every period of second religiousness.

Spengler is, however, definitely wrong in contending that Russia is becoming more and more Asiatic, that the primitive Russian soul is freeing itself from pseudomorphosis, and that, in opposition to the West, it is groping for forms of expression of its own. It is preposterous to say that Marxian ideology, the product of Western civilization, has had no influence on the character of Russian culture, that it has been merely an external force by

which the Russian soul has expressed itself, a sort of foreign language to be discarded as soon as Russia becomes conscious of herself.

Western civilization has given Russia not only the Marxian ideas of social revolution, but also Marx's scientific analysis of the development of modern economic life. What is still more important, the West has given Russia the machine, modern means of production and transport, the printing press, the wireless, the talkies, and all other scientific achievements. With zeal and vigor Russia has set out to outstrip Europe in industrialization and intellectual education and, thanks to her scientific Five Year Plans, she is already far advanced toward her goal. In matters of production and distribution, Russia has adopted and applied Marx's ideas, which are based on the most progressive conclusions of economic rationalism; and in so doing she has already stolen a march upon the Western peoples. The results so far achieved are not yet sufficiently felt outside Russia, because the adaptation of a backward people to the most modern methods of production is not as easy a process as the importation of machines.

Spengler takes the view that the primitive Russian soul, by its very nature, abhors the machine as something alien and unintelligible, and that sooner or later the *mujik* will revolt against it, with results which no one can foresee. This forecast is consistent with Spengler's idea of historical pseudomorphosis, which admits of no other possibilities than either complete suffocation of the young cultural soul by alien forces or else its complete deliverance by a revolt against them. The results so far achieved by the Russian revolution definitely disprove Spengler's forecast of its future. The revolutionary changes in the

economic, political, and social structure of the Soviets, the improvement in the means of transport and communication, the professional training of youth and conscious moulding of its character by a strict system of education and propaganda, and the extensive utilization of printing press, wireless, films, and the stage for this purpose—these fundamental changes in every sphere of human endeavor have not only accelerated the cultural development of Russia, but have also shaped the character of the Russian people.

The ideas of social revolution which originated in the West, the European sciences, and the rational methods and forms of production imported from without, have not stifled the Russian soul, but have on the contrary released and shaped it by changing its environment and giving it a definite direction. Russian music, the theatre, films, and literature, Russian creativeness and resourcefulness exhibited in the field of social, economic, and military reconstruction, and the astounding adventures in scientific research, make it abundantly clear that the adoption of ideas and forms of life of an old civilization have had but a beneficial influence on Russia. The enthusiasm with which the Russians cling to all these achievements of European civilization and the benefits which they derive from them, make the suggestion that they would ever revolt against them simply absurd. The economic, political, and social confusion into which the peoples of the West have inextricably thrown themselves by their failure to follow their own ideas to their logical conclusions and to apply them accordingly, rather suggest that Russia will open the eyes of the Western peoples to the possibility of taking full advantage of the achievements of their own civilization.

Spengler's idea of pseudomorphosis has been discussed at length, because its clarification is of paramount importance to a profound understanding of Spengler's forecast as to the future of European civilization, including that of the Jews, and because the chief aim of this book is to give a scientific interpretation not only of Israel's past, but also of its present situation and the possibilities of its future development. If a disproportionate amount of space has been devoted to Russia, this is because she is a living illustration of the fallacy of Spengler's idea of pseudomorphosis, especially in a case in which an inner cultural inter-action is consciously willed, controlled, and directed, and because the relationship between Europe and Russia is the crucial problem of today—one, moreover, with which the Jews also are vitally concerned.

Now we come to the question whether the peoples of the world will have the power to stave off the danger of self-annihilation and be able to solve the difficulties with which they are beset. Is the death of European civilization inevitable, as Spengler has predicted, and what are the implications of his forecast? Is his *Decline of the West* merely a nightmare or is it an inescapable fate?

We have seen that Spengler predicts future developments not as in the nature of possibilities but as in accordance with a predestined fate over which we have no control. The forecast of our future is as reliable as the prediction that maturity will be followed by senility and senility by death. Spengler says that a culture is just as doomed to extinction as any organic being. Cultural exhaustion is inevitably followed by the physical extinction of nations—the depopulation of cities and a gradual fall in the birth rate. This idea implies that human history



is aimless and without purpose. Cultures are predestined to die, that is, to fade into nothingness. Yet Spengler resents being called a pessimist. It is true that fatalism is a prominent trend of modern thought and that it also underlies Marxism, which predicts the inevitable collapse of capitalism, to be followed by communism; but whereas Marxism is intrinsically optimistic, Spengler's idea of the inevitable fate of every culture is inherently pessimistic.

This pessimism seems to find some justification in the history of past cultures. In the first place, all the known cultures of the past have passed through the same fixed succession of epochs until they have exhausted themselves and perished. From the point of view of culture, as Spengler conceives it, moreover, it is true that civilization represents an epoch of decline and decay in relation to the preceding epochs of culture. History furthermore bears out Spengler's contention that the cosmopolitan intelligence causes confusion, a chaos of contradictions, and finally becomes self-destructive. The events of contemporary modern life also seem to testify to the validity of this, Spengler's, idea of the self-destructive character of civilizations.

In *Jahre der Entscheidung*, Spengler elaborates the application of his conception of history to the immediate problems of mankind, and he analyzes the present situation in the light of his theory. He arrives at the conclusion that we are living in a period analogous, in every detail, to the corresponding cultural era which preceded Caesarism. We have accordingly entered upon a period of wars, riots, and upheavals, the outcome of which will be the Imperium Mundi—World Empire—similar to the Roman Empire of the Caesars, and this will be brought



about, not by a revolution from below, but by dictatorship from above. It is not the enfeebled, rootless masses of the cosmopolis with their intelligent, conceited, and self-centered leaders, but the army and the aristocratic leaders whose blood has not yet congealed and who strive joyfully for a real life, a life of dangers and adventures, who will conquer the world. After a review of all the peoples of Western culture and after dismissing almost all of them as being far advanced in the process of disintegration and exhaustion, he comes to the conclusion that only Germany, as the youngest nation of Western culture, is capable of producing a Caesar who will unite all the white peoples by force and, after a decisive battle with Asia, especially Russia and Japan, establish a World Empire under his dictatorship. All other problems, economic, social, and the rest, are merely secondary and entirely dependent on the political. Trade agreements, customs duties, raising of wages and reduction in working hours, deflation or inflation of currencies, quotas of imports and exports, restrictions on output or the dumping of goods, all these are desperate but futile attempts to overcome the economic crisis. This world economic crisis cannot be solved by programs, however intelligent they may be. Only a world war, of incomparably greater magnitude than the last Great War, will solve the economic problems. Only a political dictator, endowed with the power to *dictate* conditions, instead of bargaining for them, will be capable of releasing mankind from the net of contradictions in which it is at present hopelessly enmeshed.

These ideas of Spengler's are typically reactionary. The glorification of the savage and of the primitive in human nature and the distrust of reason, are character-

istic of Spengler's mentality. That school of modern psychology which degrades reason to the status of a handmaid of irrational instincts and impulses, supports Spengler's ideas. Spengler's saying, "Man is a beast of prey; a pacifist is a beast of prey with teeth knocked out," would be endorsed by many modern psychologists, who maintain that the function of reason is to secure the ends which we unconsciously set ourselves and to invent excuses and arguments for what we instinctively want to do and to believe. Modern psychology and Spengler's conception are both based upon the idea that fundamentally man is swayed by the same kind of natural forces as animals, and that reason is a late and feeble by-product of these instinctive natural forces. It may be likened to a cork tossed about on the waves of impulse, instinctive urge, and desire. Spengler draws the conclusion that whatever our plans and programs may be, the "*beast of prey*" will decide the issue. Considering the modern means of destruction which are today at the disposal of this beast of prey, we may well imagine what would be the result if Spengler's conclusion were correct.

Let us go further and suppose that Germany is the fittest beast of prey, though it is far from sure that other nations would concede this title to her without a struggle in which all the beasts might perish, and that this beast of beasts has won the World War and bestowed upon the world a Caesar who will rule the Imperium Mundi. What will then be the end? According to Spengler's conception of history, no civilization can escape decay and final extinction. Consequently, Germany too will have to undergo this inevitable process of degeneration and disintegration; and she, too, will eventually become extinct. Spengler does not shudder at such prospects. He exhorts

us to submit willingly to what is to him an inescapable historical fate.

It must be admitted that much of what Spengler says concerning the present world situation is true. We do live in a world of absurd contradictions. Under-consumption and poverty in the midst of plenty and over-production, chauvinistic adherence to national sovereignty in a world of economic inter-dependence of nations, mystic movements, religious superstitions, and fantastic race-theories, side by side with high scientific achievements, murderous wars, and barbaric persecutions of minorities in a world united by wireless, airships, and economic interests—this chaos of ideas and tendencies seems to point to the collapse also of European civilization. Human intelligence, on the other hand, refuses to submit to such a fate. It is just the European civilization which has provided scientific achievements on an unprecedented scale, and especially the machine of mass production, with the aid of which we can supply all our needs, that may escape the fate of other civilizations and establish a new order of things.

At this juncture, Spengler would retort: "Was not the chief object of my work to prove that life organized by intelligence is not life but civilization, congealed and petrified—that is, death?"

Whatever the nature and potentialities of reason may be, there is no getting away from the fact that, at the present stage of development, reason is man's only guide to truth and his only hope for the future. If Spengler and modern psychologists are right in their distrust of reason, then surely we are justified in distrusting their theories, which are creations of pure reason. If, on the other hand, Spengler and the others are able to reason disinterestedly

and in accordance with fact, then so are other people. In any case, the instinctive life of Western peoples is today in such hopeless confusion, brought about by repressions and inhibitions, that the instincts are not only unreliable but, if let loose, they would lead the Western peoples to mutual annihilation. Is not the confusion prevailing in advanced civilizations due rather to the weakness of reason than to the decline of instinctive forces? Is it not rather by reason of the fact that these confused instincts and impulses have in the past refused to submit to the direction of reason, that civilizations have perished? Rationalism, completely emancipated from subconscious forces, would be able to put an end to the confusion, the inner contradictions, and the other difficulties with which all advanced civilizations are beset. No one with any sense could suggest that it would be possible to find a solution to the complicated problems of this day by instinct.

If one despairs of reason, one must despair of the future of mankind as well. There is no other force capable of redeeming mankind from its present plight but reason. Rationalism does not necessarily involve the suffocation of our instincts and desires. It means, rather, the unraveling of our subconscious complexes and the conscious sublimation of unreasonable desires. The fictitious human automaton of Huxley's *Brave New World* is not an ideal to be striven for. Our scientific insight into the workings of the human mind and soul will find ways and means to beautify and enrich our inner life.

It is undoubtedly true that the primary creativeness of a young culture is not transferable. Neither a Homer nor a Phidias nor an Isaiah nor a Michael Angelo can be consciously begotten or bred. The works of these masters are



inimitable. They are creations mainly of subconscious forces which cannot be transplanted. General artistic, musical, and ethical values are, on the other hand, capable of being disseminated by suitable means of education. At the present time, at any rate, *transferable* values of an *economic* character are of paramount importance. It is not poems, statues, or religious inspirations which engage the mind of modern man. The man of the cosmopolis is, as Spengler rightly observes, much more interested in money, the engine, and entertainment than in art or religion. It is quite true that in the later stages of every civilization, economic problems are fundamental. With economic problems, therefore, is mankind today chiefly confronted and concerned. Marx offers a much better solution to these than does Spengler. It is also more scientific. Judged from the point of view of the modern man who has outgrown the hankerings for barbaric wars and inhuman patriotism, Marx represents the finest analysis of the economic evils of modern society and offers the most rational suggestions for their cure. Although Marx's historical materialism is untenable, his general theory concerning the development of modern economic life has already proved correct. Almost all his predictions concerning the most essential economic problems have come true. The concentration of capital, the impoverishment and elimination of the middle classes, and the irremediable crisis resulting from imperialistic capitalism, were clearly foreseen by Marx three-quarters of a century ago. Spengler himself, endowed with an immense intellectual capacity, has undoubtedly contributed to a scientific understanding of human life, notwithstanding that his theory is fundamentally metaphysical. His distrust of reason, which has led him to glorify the beast in man,



has, however, disqualified him as a guide of civilized mankind.

Instinctive forces may have determined the conduct and direction of the life of primitive and young peoples, but the hampering complexity of the subconscious life of the modern man is so immense that to entrust our destiny to it would mean relying on the biblical "staff of bruised reed whereon if a man lean it will go into his hand and pierce it." No matter whether the enfeeblement of our instincts is the result of natural development and a sign of senility, as Spengler asserts, or of complexes produced by repressions and inhibitions, as the psychoanalysts contend, the indisputable fact remains that reason and only reason is the sole hope of civilized mankind. With the aid of reason, man has conquered the natural forces of the physical world and has subjected them to his will. He has created the machine to serve him, he has abolished natural boundaries, and he is able to fly like a bird, to converse with friends at immense distances, and to cure diseases. The sciences which deal with the natural forces governing *human* history and determining human behavior are also rapidly advancing. Is it really so absurd to hope that they will sooner or later achieve results of a magnitude comparable to those already achieved in the realms of the physical sciences? No science can change natural laws, but the scientific knowledge of these laws enables us, to a great extent, to utilize them for desired ends and to prevent their unpleasant effects when permitted to operate without control. We cannot change the laws of electricity, but, thanks to our knowledge of them, we are able to make electricity serve us. We cannot abolish lightning, but we can avoid its unpleasant effects by using lightning conductors.

The same principle can and must be applied to the natural forces which govern history and man's behavior, otherwise our civilization will be doomed. Psychoanalysis gives us an idea of what could be done in this direction. It has already to its credit many successes in the cure of psychic diseases, effected by bringing subconsciously suppressed instincts and impulses to the light of consciousness and by inducing the patient to adapt himself *consciously* to his environment. Mankind is likewise suffering from insanity, because it has, so far, failed to adapt itself to the inescapable dictates of civilization. By dispensing its complexes with the aid of reason and by the conscious sublimation of its suppressed tendencies, civilization can be saved. To distrust reason and to glorify the "beast of prey" in human nature must, on the other hand, involve either the perpetuation of the madhouse in which mankind finds itself today or else the advocacy of certain mutual destruction in crazy, murderous wars.

#### IV. SPENGLER'S CONCEPTION OF JUDAISM

We have seen that Judaism does not figure among the cultures enumerated by Spengler. This is due to the fact that he does not regard Israel as a distinctive and independent culture, but as an integral part of Magian culture, of which he proudly regards himself the original discoverer. Just as the French, Germans, and other European peoples belong to Western culture, so do Jews, Persians, Syrians, and Arabs belong to the Magian. Consequently, there is no specific Jewish culture just as there are no separate French and German cultures. We shall see later how fallacious is this theory, but we do not at the present propose to join issue with Spengler. The object of this chapter is merely to expound Spengler's conception of Judaism.

According to Spengler, the Magian culture awakened from the dreams of its childhood at approximately the time of the rise of Christianity. About this time the Aramean world, extending from the Nile to the Euphrates, from Cairo to Bagdad, began to break up into various distinctly separate Magian peoples.

Whatever happened in this world prior to the Christian era (500 B. C. E.—1 C. E.) was nothing more than a preparation for the great cultural awakening. These events comprised the pre-cultural stage of Magian culture. The Israelitic tribes, before the Babylonian exile, lived in the sphere of the old Babylonian culture, which had flour-

ished and ripened long previously and had by that time (from 1800 B. C. E. on) spread, as an old civilization, throughout the then known world. Israel was merely a loose group of Idumean tribes which, together with Moabites, Amalekites, Ishmaelites, and others, formed a fairly homogeneous Hebrew speaking population of Canaan. Yet the works of the great prophets of Israel already contained the seeds of Magian culture. In them, as well as in Zoroaster, the first stirrings of the Magian soul manifested themselves.

What are the characteristics of Magian culture? Spengler deals at length with this question and, by comparing the Magian with other cultures, draws an interesting picture of it. As his characterization of the Magian is conjectural and as it is, moreover, not applicable to Israel's culture, there follows below merely a brief summary of Spengler's thesis.

The Magian man may be pictured as sitting in a dark cave into which a shining light penetrates from without, struggling against the darkness within the cave. The man takes part in the struggle but is unable to decide it. In other words, the man of the Magian culture possessed a soul which was earth-bound, but he partook of the spirit of Light and Good descending upon him from above. This prime feeling which dominated all the faiths of Magian peoples was something unique, and it distinguished the Magian religion from all others. Western man possessed an ego which strove after infinite power in an infinite space and time. Classical man was merely a body amongst others, limited in space and time, whereas the Magian man was, in his spiritual existence, a part of all those who enjoyed the light which descended from above. As regards body and soul, he belonged to him-

self, but in spiritual life he belonged to the community of all those enjoying the divine spirit of light.

For this reason, a Magian nation had no fatherland and no national language. Confession of a creed, submission to the commands of Good and Light, was the deciding integrative force of all Magian peoples. Locality and language were of no account. To a Greek, his city was his only home; a neighboring city was already foreign land. To a Magian, however, the religious community, irrespective of its locality, was his home, and only members of a different religious community were foreigners to him.

Among Magian peoples, State and Church were theoretically inseparable. Sacred and civil laws were one and the same. Only Magian religions created canons—holy, God-inspired books written in a holy language. Only they were religions of Revelation. God's spirit revealed itself in them and, as His work was acknowledged to be infallible, a critical examination was regarded as sinful and punishable. To comment on it was alone permissible. Consequently, in order to bring the written Revelation, the text of holy books, into accord with the convictions and ideals of advanced periods, a sacred meaning was sought and found in them. With this object in view, religious colleges came into being which were characteristic of old Magian religions. Talmudic traditions flourished in these colleges.

The confession, the creed, the consensus were the determining factors in the life of Magian peoples. Consequently the Jews, Christians, and Arabs were more interested in religious missions than in territorial expansion, in conquering men for their spiritual salvation rather than in their political subjection.



We can now understand why it is that the whole pre-exilic history of Israel is dismissed by Spengler as simply a prelude to the real history of Arabian culture. The prophets are regarded by him as merely the forerunners of Magian religions and nothing more. Moreover, they were not specifically Israelitish. The belief in one true God who reveals Himself through His messengers; the abhorrence of images; the dualism of good and evil, light and darkness; the messianic hope that after a world historic struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, the God of good and light would prevail and in the end the Kingdom of Heaven would be established—all these elements of a Magian religion which had already been embryonically contained in the prophets, were common to Persians and Chaldeans, as well as to Jews. Ahura Mazda, Marduk, and Yahweh were gods of the same cultural character, because they were gods of peoples of the same Magian soul.

The pre-exilic Jews could not understand the Magian ideas of the great prophets. They were steeped in the syncretistic religion of old civilizations and formed a nation of an entirely different character from the Jewish nation which arose in exile. In Babylon the Jews began to form themselves, simultaneously with other Magian peoples, into a distinctive Magian nation, without land or national language. There, in exile, prophetic Judaism transformed itself into apocalyptic Judaism. All the new visions about the "Son of Man," "Satan," the "angels," "seven heavens," and the "day of judgment" were Persian concepts of the same world feeling. Is it not possible that the Persians themselves felt their cultural affinity with the Jews when they gave Israel permission to return to Palestine and rebuild the temple? It is certain that both

Persians and Jews shared the same hatred of the old Babylonian and classical religions, while between themselves there was no such ill-feeling.

The return of Jews to Palestine appears to Spengler to be historically an insignificant event. But a few (about forty thousand) stubborn fanatics returned. The great multitude of Jews remained in Babylon, content under the rule of their own prince—Resh Galutha—whose residence was in Nahardea. The Jews of the diaspora regarded Jerusalem as a kind of Mecca, a holy place, but they were not vitally interested in it. They lived a full life in the lands of their adoption and there, in the East, flourished the Apocalypse as the heir of prophetism.

In Judea, however, only legal literature flourished. The talmudic spirit first appeared in Ezekiel, and was embodied in the works of the scribes, with Ezra as their prototype. From 300 B. C. E. to 200 C. E. the tannaim interpreted the Torah, and so the Mishnah came into being. Here in Judea there was no room for secular art, poetry, or science. All medical and astronomical discourses contained in the Talmud originated in Mesopotamia. Law and the prophets—that is the difference between Judea and Mesopotamia. In Judea—Pharisaic narrow-mindedness; in Mesopotamia—the great apocalyptic visions and broad religious conceptions of life. This difference explains why in Mesopotamia and other countries of exile, the Jewish nation spread by means of conversions, which are the only form of Magian conquest, whereas in Judea the Jews were strictly opposed to any missionary activity. In the north, Judaism penetrated across the Jewish military state of Adiabene, to the Caucasus; in the south, to Saba; and in the west to Alexandria and Cyprus. The administration of Egypt and the policy of the Parthian

Empire were to a great extent conducted by Jews. In Judea, on the other hand, King Hyrcanus was called upon to abdicate because his mother had once been imprisoned by foreigners. Such insistence on racial purity was a negation of the principles of Magian culture; and so was local Judean patriotism.

Consequently, Vespasian's successful war against Judea meant, in reality, the liberation of true Judaism. Thereby the claim of the inhabitants of this small territory to be *the* nation disappeared. There was no more danger of this small narrow-minded minority being identified with the whole of the Jewish people. The rights of the Eastern colleges which were engaged in scientific research—scholasticism and mysticism—were restored. Moreover, the Jews of Palestine had been in danger of becoming Hellenized. In the second century B. C. E. there were high priests who attempted to Hellenize the Jewish religion, and later rulers such as Herod tried to introduce Hellenism by political means. The destruction of the Jewish state in the year 70 C. E. staved off this danger of cultural pseudomorphosis.

In the time of Jesus, Palestinian Judaism comprised three sections, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. The Pharisees and the Sadducees bore to each other a relationship similar to that between scholasticism and mysticism. The Pharisees were imbued with the exclusive talmudic spirit, insisting on strict observance of rites rather than on faith and vision. According to them, a Jew ignorant of the law could not be truly religious. The Sadducees were the genuine sons of a Magian people, indulging in apocalyptic visions and mystic moods. The Essenes were hermits reminiscent of the members of the neo-Pythagorean sects, and they represented the Hellenistic

pseudomorphosis. As such, they disappeared altogether from Jewish life after the destruction of the Temple. But the apocalyptic literature also, after having flourished for a while (Baruch, IV Ezra, John's Revelations), decayed and withered under the weight of the national calamity. When Judaism rejected Christianity and the latter detached itself and developed into a new and independent religion, the apocalyptic spirit disappeared from the Synagogue and became the driving force of the new religion.

Now the Magian soul awoke. That which had lain latent in the prophetic religion as a dim premonition, fulfilled itself at last. An indescribable stir went through the Aramean world. Magian culture became conscious of itself. A convulsive spasm shook the people. Stirring revelations and visions of miracles overpowered their minds. Men lived and thought in apocalyptic pictures. Mysterious stories about the imminent advent of the Day of Judgment spread like wildfire from community to community. This movement was international in character, like the Magian culture itself, and embraced Persians and Chaldeans as well as Jews. The canonical books written in national language were national. The apocalyptic spirit was international. The saviour of all these apocalyptic visions was expected to redeem the world as a whole and not a particular nation.

In this world, full of mysterious expectations, Christianity took its rise. It differed from other similar movements chiefly by the personality of its founder. The gripping life-story of Jesus, the story of his ride to Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the crucifixion, overshadowed all comparable stories such as those of the holy adventures of Mithras, Attis, and Osiris. The story of Jesus' life in the company of simple folk, of fishermen and artisans from



Galilee, was of such overwhelming inwardness and simplicity that it became the symbol and centre of the whole movement.

The forerunner of Jesus was John the Baptist, who, from a deep hatred of the spirit prevailing in Jerusalem, had prophesied the end of the world and the advent of a Messiah who would bring about a world conflagration. Jesus was his disciple and, like his teacher, he was haunted by fiery visions against the rabbinistic spirit of Jerusalem. So the Magian religious soul revolted against the rationalized religion of Jerusalem. Soul and Reason crossed swords in a historic encounter. The naive religion of the countryside rebelled against the speculative spirit of artificial city life.

Christianity was originally disinterested in the affairs of this world. "My kingdom is not of this world," preached its founder. Political and economic considerations simply did not count. One had to serve either God or Mammon, Mammon denoting the whole world of reality. The command, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's," meant: Submit yourselves to the forces of the world of reality and do not even enquire whether they are just or not. Only the salvation of the soul is of significance. It is wrong to ascribe to early Christianity socialistic tendencies in the modern sense. Nothing was more alien to it. Modern socialists have always been concerned with the just distribution of wealth, whereas the early Christians did not care for wealth at all. Socialism is a modern phenomenon of a decaying civilization, whereas in Christianity an awakening culture found expression.

The founder of Christianity and his friends were Jews by birth, but they were alien to the Jewish spirit of Judea.



Here, in Jerusalem, a national Messiah was expected who would redeem the Jewish people, whereas in the rest of the Aramean world, a Messiah who would be the saviour of the world was expected, though he appear under a Jewish, Persian, Chaldean, or Masdean name and in respective national colors. The conception was that of a world nation—one shepherd and one flock.

Post-exilic Jewry, as all other peoples of the Magian culture, were bent on some mission. Racial and geographical considerations did not exist. Only the narrow-minded, self-centered Jews of Palestine clung to their racial purity and were opposed to expansion by conversion, which was to a Magian people the only genuine form of conquest. No wonder, then, that they rejected Christianity.

It is of great significance that Spengler himself regards it as an exceptional case in world history that Christianity, as the religion of the simple country folk of Galilee, transformed itself within but one generation after the death of Jesus into a religion of the great Hellenistic cities of the West. Henceforth the Hellenistic cities were the only forum of its cultic and dogmatic development. Spengler regards Paul as responsible for this course of development. As a former rabbi, disciple of Gamaliel, he possessed a sharp city intelligence and sense for practical affairs. He was therefore attracted by the decaying classical cosmopolis rather than by the quiet countryside of Galilee.

Spengler deals at length with only two periods in the development of Judaism: that of early Christianity, and the last period when Judaism came into contact with peoples of Western culture. Other periods of the historical development of Judaism were overshadowed by great

movements which took place among other Magian peoples, such as Western Christianity and Mohammedanism, the interpretation of which is to Spengler of much greater importance than that of the concurrent epochs within Judaism.

Before dealing with the Jews living among people of Western culture, let us briefly reproduce Spengler's outline of Judaism as one of the manifestations of Magian culture.

All the historical events within Judaism in the period from 500 B. C. E. to the new era, belonged to the pre-cultural stage of Magian culture. During this period, the Jews, like the Persians and the Chaldeans, crystallized into nations of Magian type without country, without unity of racial descent, and, already in those times, with the Ghetto mode of living which has persisted to this day. This was the childhood period of Magian culture. Then came the cultural epoch which is divisible into two stages, corresponding to youth and maturity, and lasting about five hundred and three hundred years respectively.

In the earlier stage (1 to 500 C. E.) the landless Magian peoples spread outwards as far as Spain and Shantung, their faith being their only and exclusive unifying element. It was the heroic period marked by great creative genius, this applying also to Judaism. It expressed itself in the later apocalyptic literature, the Mishnah, and in early Christianity. It is known that the Jews of that time were peasants, artisans, and dwellers in small towns. The big financial enterprises were in the hands of Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, the "old" peoples of that time. It was the time when Jews under Trajan staged a massacre of the Greek population which is comparable with the Crusades. The warlike Adiabene was a Jewish state. In

all Persian and Parthian wars the Jews fought in the first ranks. In Sura, Nahardea, and Pumbeditha, scholasticism and mysticism of a wonderful Magian kind flourished. Parallel forms of expression are also found among other Magian peoples, such as the Persians and the Christians. Spengler arrives at the astounding conclusion that the Roman law of that time was also one of the expression-forms of Magian culture. The classical jurists (160 to 220 C. E.) Papinian, Ulpian, and Paulus, were Arameans, descended from the same race as the tannaim who, about 200 C. E., completed the Mishnah. In *Corpus Juris* and the Talmud, the Magian spirit is given equal expression, and both were written in Magian style, irrespective of the language used. Furthermore, the form of study of the Divine Law was identical in both cases. The words and even the letters were examined and interpreted not according to their natural meaning but in their mystical relation to the case at issue.

In the later stage of development (500 to 800 C. E.) the period of maturity of Magian culture, the Arabian nation, from the time of Mohammed, gained predominance at the expense of the other Magian nations. Spengler regards Mohammed as the "contemporary" of Cromwell. Islam was not a new religion but a puritanic movement crystallizing in a movement of reformation within the history of the Magian religion, and analogous to the corresponding movements of puritanism and reformation in all other religions. The expansion of Islam is generally thought to have been a kind of migration of peoples originating in the Arabian Peninsula, but in actual fact it was an onward rush of enthusiastic followers of Mohammed, the prophet, which, like an avalanche, carried before it Christians, Jews, and Masdeans alike. It was only

by accident that this movement arose among Arabian tribes and that an Arab and not a Jew or Christian was its herald. One must not, however, lose sight of the fact that Mecca, cradle of Mohammedanism, was a small island of old Arabian paganism situated in a sea of Jews and Christians; a small remnant which had long before been influenced by the great Magian religions.

In this Islamic movement, the soul of Magian culture found its full expression and, as in the case of puritanism in every religion, so also Mohammed's Islamism already contained elements of Rationalism which, after a few generations, broke through and pervaded all the provinces of life. The spiritual centre of gravitation of Jews as well as of Persians, Arabs, and Byzantines was now the Megalopolis. Saragossa, Toledo, and Granada were predominantly Jewish cities. Jews formed an integral part of Moorish society. Their perfect forms of social life and their esprit were admired by the nobility of the Crusaders. The diplomacy, warfare, and administration of Moorish states cannot be conceived without the Jewish aristocracy. Jewish literature and science flourished in these cities.

The Jews of Spain and Morocco, however, formed a very small part of the Jewish consensus. As a whole, the Jewish people exhibited not only secular but also and predominantly spiritual tendencies. As among Arabs, so also among Jews, there arose a movement of Reformation which rejected the Talmud and sought to return to the pure Torah. The community of Karaites was established in Northern Syria, approximately 700 c. e. The Karaites shared the experience of all followers of Reformation in that they were opposed by orthodoxy, and the struggle



between conflicting religious tendencies expressed itself in a rich literature.

This period also marked the beginning of the chief work of Jewish rationalistic mysticism—the Book of Creation. Its kabbalistic concepts and speculative methods were similar to those of parallel movements among other Magian peoples of that time, and there was nothing specifically Jewish about them.

That is all that Spengler has to say about Judaism in its supposed period of maturity, the climax of its development. How Judaism transformed itself into a religion of Fellaheen, Spengler does not explain. Nor do we hear anything about the “second religiousness” of Judaism. He mentions only that Judaism became a timeless religion of Fellaheen from the time of Jehudah Halevi, who, like his Islamitic teacher, Al Ghasali, regarded scientific philosophy with utter scepticism; in *Kuzari* (1140 C. E.), he treated it as merely the handmaid of devout theology. Still more noteworthy in this respect was Moses Maimonides who, about 1175 C. E., brought the whole mass of Jewish doctrines into a complete and rigid system. Thus, all the potentialities of Judaism were exhausted and, as a part of Magian culture, its life course ended. Henceforth Judaism became timeless and its life void of any historical significance.

Yet the life of the Jews in the second millennium of the Christian era is of great interest—due to the fact that Judaism, the old timeless civilization, was drawn into the orbit of the young West European culture. To this period of Jewish history Spengler devotes an extensive chapter, and his ideas are reproduced below at some length, as they are particularly provocative and of great



interest in regard to the relationship between Jew and Gentile in the Western world in which we live.

The position occupied by Jews in the sphere of Western culture was entirely different from their status during the preceding periods. In Spain, the Jews lived among people of the same culture as their own, and *ipso facto* also of the same cultural age. At this stage, however, they began to clash with the Germano-Romanic world, which still lived in a townless landscape and which had not yet found its own soul. The Jews were already civilized, with the mentality of great cities, whereas the others were still primitive people with settlements round monasteries and castles. The Jews did not understand the Gothic inwardness, the castle, the dome; and the Christians did not appreciate the superior, almost cynical, intelligence of the Jews which had already been completely formed. Their mutual hatred and contempt was not, as yet, the result so much of a consciousness of racial difference as of lack of cultural "contemporaneousness." The Western European culture was still too young to be conscious of itself; and in the midst of this young culture the Jews set up their ghettos with the proletarian mentality of great cities. The "Judengasse," that is to say, the Jewish street, was by a thousand years ahead of the Gothic settlements; in fact they show the same relationship to each other as did the Roman cities and the villages on the Sea of Tiberias in the time of early Christianity.

Apart from this, however, there was the circumstance that these young nations were intimately bound up with the soil and the idea of a fatherland, whereas the Jew, by reason of his cultural character, was homeless. The communal life of the Jew appeared to a Gothic Christian as something uncanny and incomprehensible. It was in those

days that the legend about the Wandering Jew originated.

The ghetto was a state within a state. Spinoza and Uriel Acosta were found guilty of treason by a Jewish tribunal and expelled from the "Jewish state"; and in 1789 Senior Salman, hassidic thinker, was handed over by the rabbinist opposition to the Government in St. Petersburg as though it were the government of a foreign country. The Jew was a stranger to his Christian neighbors beyond the walls of the ghetto, but he was at home in any Jewish community in the world. He was already at that time a world citizen. In Moorish Spain the Jews still retained some association with the soil. Within the sphere of Western culture they lost it completely. Here there were no more Jewish peasants. The smallest ghetto, poor though it might be, was a piece of cosmopolis and its inhabitants were divided, like those of rigid India and China, into castes. The rabbis were the Brahmins or Mandarins of the ghetto and the masses of ghetto Jews were, like coolies, a people of civilized, cold, and superior intelligence and acute business mind. This is not an extraordinary phenomenon since the Crusades. All Magian nations are on the same level. The Parsees in India and the Armenians and Greeks in southeastern Europe are in the same position as the Jews in the European-American world, and they possess the same economic power. Moreover, this phenomenon has its counterpart in any other civilization which has been built into the landscape of a young culture. The Chinese in California and elsewhere and the Indian merchants in East Africa, testify to this fact. Similarly, the Romans in the "young" Aramean world lived under identical conditions. They were the "clever Jews" of that time and the apocalyptic hatred of

the Arameans against them is analogous to West European anti-Semitism. It was a genuine "pogrom" when, in the year 88, at Mithridates' nod, 100,000 Roman business men were slaughtered by the embittered population of Asia Minor. In the course of time, this conflict became intensified by the steadily growing consciousness of the racial difference between the young Western culture and the old Magian civilization, but this consciousness has nothing to do with the stupid slogans concerning Aryans versus Semites. In relation to the people of Western culture neither the "Aryan" Persians nor the Armenians differ from the "Semitic" Jews. The Jews are a mixture of races brought about by conversion. They have developed distinctive racial characteristics due to their culture and the particular conditions of their life. These peculiarities have nothing to do with physiological descent. Spengler generally uses the term "race" in its cultural and not in its physiological sense.

Now, the feeling of being different inevitably creates, between neighbors, a situation fraught with dangers. During the Gothic epoch, the dislike of the unlike Jew was fundamentally religious and it was directed chiefly against Judaism as a religion. Finally, the fact that while the Western peoples were undergoing a great historical development of deep import, the Jews were living a life void of any historical significance, also had very tragic effect upon the relations between Jews and Western peoples. All the problems of the Jewish consensus had been solved and its inner form rendered complete and unalterable. Centuries were, to the Jew, of no significance, and he was therefore unable to understand the vehement passion with which his neighbors experienced the fateful historical events in which his people were involved. Cru-

sades, reformations, revolutions, wars of liberation, and so on, lay about thirty generations behind the Jew. History upon the grandest scale simply flowed by the ghetto; epoch succeeded epoch; and with each century people became different; but in the ghetto everything stood still, not only in communal life but also in the souls of individuals.

Lacking an inner understanding of the happenings outside the ghetto, the Jew could be only a critical, indifferent spectator with the basic feeling of a Magian man, however firmly he might be convinced of the European character of his mental outlook. This attitude is comparable with that of modern Europeans, who criticize all foreign events in the light of their own culture and who are unable to realize that concepts such as "Constitution," "Parliament," or "Democracy" are ridiculous and meaningless when applied to peoples of other cultures. In the same way, the Romans could not comprehend the significance of the triumph of Jesus or Bar Kochba's revolt.

Since every Magian nation is landless, the Jew sees in the various dynastic and national wars something alien and senseless, whereas out of the word "international" he extracts the essence of his landless consensus, no matter whether the word be applied to socialism, pacifism, or capitalism. The constitutional wars and revolutions meant to a European a step forward towards a civilized life, while to a Jew they mean the breaking up and annihilation of all that is alien to him. Even when the life of the people among whom the Jew lives exercises an outward attraction upon him and inspires him with real patriotism, yet the party to which he belongs is always the one whose aims correspond most nearly with the spirit of a Magian nation. Thus in Germany he is a democrat, and



in England, he is like the Parsee of India, an imperialist.

The same applies to the religiousness of the Western world when it feels itself threatened and undermined by the alien metaphysics in its midst. And what historical changes have the religions of Western peoples undergone during all the centuries of their existence, while during all this time the Jewish religion has had no history whatever! In the year 1565, Joseph Caro, in his *Shulhan Arukh*, revised and re-arranged the traditional law as Maimonides had done long before. If this had been done in 1400 or in 1800, or not at all, it would not have made any difference. The rigid forms of ritual life have for centuries remained the same, and they would have remained so without the *Shulhan Arukh*.

Similarly Jewish mysticism has remained unchanged since the Crusades. In Baalshem (1698) the founder of Hassidism, there arose a genuine Messiah. Wandering through the world of Polish ghettos, teaching and performing miracles, he reminds us of the founder of Christianity. Baalshem's peaceful struggle against the talmudic Pharisees of his time; the abundance of legends which were soon woven around him and his disciples; the bands of Hassidim falling into solemn religious raptures or dancing feverishly like Islamitic dervishes—all that is as incomprehensible to a European as early Christianity itself. One of the apostles of Hassidism propagated the idea of Zaddikim, holy saviours, whom God sends to deliver the faithful. Another disciple, Solomon Maimun, went straight from Baalshem to Kant, whose abstract thinking has always attracted talmudic minds. A third, Otto Weininger, succumbed to the conflict which raged in his soul, and committed suicide. To people of Western



civilization these phenomena are like a book with seven seals.

After the Enlightenment (*Aufklaerung*) of the eighteenth century, the Western culture, too, centered in great cities and became intellectualized. Thereby this culture, transformed into civilization, suddenly became accessible to the intelligence of the Jewish consensus and aroused in the Jew a feeling of kinship. The Jew at once plunged into the great cultural currents of his surroundings and, with his critical and dissecting mind, analyzed, disintegrated, and poisoned everything with which he came into contact. To the Western people the *Aufklaerung* meant a step forward in their natural course of development, while to the Jewish mind it appeared a work of destruction and the annihilation of something alien to him. This conflict has produced a spectacle similar to that of the Indian student who received an English university education and then, with cynical contempt, looked down upon Indian as well as Western convictions, with the result that he was himself eventually ruined by the very disintegration of which he was the sponsor. From the time of Napoleon the old civilized Jewish people mixed with the new civilized Western society of the Megalopolis and, with the superiority of age, they took advantage of the economic and scientific methods evolved by that society. A few generations later the Japanese, who are also a very old and intelligent people, did exactly the same and perhaps with even greater success.

The abolition of the ghetto and the decay of religion have placed Judaism in danger of being utterly destroyed. The reason for this danger is not that the metaphysics of both civilizations have come closer to each

other, but that among the rootless intellectuals on both sides metaphysics no longer plays any role. The mechanized, rootless life of the cosmopolis has no regard for racial difference. Economic considerations are the factors which determine the behavior of men. The Jews are losing their inner cohesion and combine merely for practical purposes. Furthermore, the advantage which the old business mind of the Magian people had over that of their neighbors is gradually growing less and disappearing. It hardly exists any longer in relation to the Americans. Thus the last strong power which has sustained the identity of the landless consensus is vanishing. In the moment when the civilized methods of the European-American world will have fully matured, the fate of Judaism, at least within this Western world, will have been definitely fulfilled. The Russian world represents a problem for itself.

Islam lives on its own soil; so do the Greeks, representing the remnant of the old Byzantine Magian nation. The Parsees of India live within the rigid forms of a still older civilization, and are thereby secure in their existence. But the Western European section of the Jewish consensus, drawn into the vortex of a young civilization and unconnected with any portion of land of its own, has disintegrated and is steering towards complete dissolution.

## V. ISRAEL'S CULTURAL CHARACTER

Not only the first but all the preceding chapters may be regarded as introduction to the main theme of this book. They form the basis upon which our conception of Israel's fate and destiny is founded. It was necessary to give an exposition of Spengler's historical morphology, together with an independent examination of its principles, because it is in the light of Spengler's modified conception of history that Israel's fate will be here expounded. It was likewise indispensable to devote a chapter to Spengler's ideas concerning Judaism, because a study of Israel's character, life-course, and destiny provides a refutation of almost everything that Spengler has to say on this subject. To a reader ignorant of Spengler's general theory and his conception of Judaism, the following chapters would be well-nigh unintelligible.

The present chapter, devoted to the characterization of Israel's cultural soul, begins a brief exposition of Israel's morphology.

By comparison with the great historical problems with which mankind is confronted at the present time, Jewish problems fade into insignificance. At a time when European civilization is on the verge of collapse, when the whole world is in a state of turmoil, when fascism and socialism, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, reactionary and progressive forces are contending for supremacy, the Jewish problems are much less than of secondary importance. No wonder, therefore, that Spengler, in his last

book dealing, from a world historical perspective, with the problems facing mankind today, does not even mention the Jews (except for his criticism of the anti-Semite's conception of race). Nevertheless, in the fog of nonsensical outpourings from anti-Semites as well as from Jews, Jewish problems loom large. Sentimental fools, romantic idealists, self-seeking demagogues, and, more especially, anti-Semitic "saviours" of mankind, have inflated Jewish difficulties out of all proportion to their real significance. It is only because irrational forces are still a determining factor in human relations of the twentieth century, that Jewish problems are still of vital importance both to Jews and to gentiles.

It is not the object of this book to enrich the immense Jewish apologetic literature. It is hopeless to combat prejudice with rational arguments. The sole aim is to clarify Jewish problems from an objective historical point of view and to examine impartially what are, under the circumstances, the most rational possibilities of their solution. No appeal is made except to reason. First and foremost, our attention will be devoted to the Jewish past.

It cannot be gainsaid that Israel's culture, as embodied in the Bible, is of a distinctive character. The question as to what are the forces which gave birth to this culture and determined its character, is of a metaphysical nature, and in order as far as possible to avoid metaphysical speculations this question will be left open. The particular historical experiences of Israel, its geographical position, the physical structure and climatic conditions of Canaan, the influences emanating from Babylon and Egypt, and certain other factors may have determined its cultural character. It is not necessary to assume that its culture arose by some mysterious power, like a ghost out

of the soil of Palestine, and materialized in Israel and its fate. This would have been Spengler's theory on the genesis of Israel if he had conceived biblical Israel as a distinctive cultural entity and not merely as one of the Magian peoples at a pre-cultural stage. In any event, it would be better to leave open the question as to the forces that have begotten Israel and determined her cultural character.

Israel's cultural character itself has been a much favored subject for speculation and speechifying. Theories and opinions on this subject are so many and diverse that it is impossible even to mention them all. Being elusive and complicated, the problem of Israel's character has become an easy prey to friend and foe alike. How easy it is to prove, by quotations detached from their historical context, that a vicious commercial spirit, greed, deceitfulness, and similar qualities are inherent in Israel's character. Did not Jahweh himself bargain with his people like a typical commercial traveler? Did not Jacob deceive his own brother in his selfish interest? Did not the Children of Israel destroy and loot their enemies with ruthless barbarism? Israel has always been a people of greedy pedlars, cruel robbers, self-seekers, and cheats. They cannot be otherwise because these qualities are inherent in their racial character. Consequently, "Beware the Jew" is the war-cry of Israel's enemies.

On the other hand, the apologists of Israel refer to the decalogue of Moses, to the lofty monotheistic ideals and the insurpassable moral pathos of Israel's prophets, to the universality and benevolence of Israel's God, to its patriotic self-abnegation and heroism as manifested in the struggle for independence against mighty empires, and so on. From such references it follows that Israel is natu-



rally entitled to the claim of being the Chosen People, the religious guide of mankind.

This perplexing divergence of opinions regarding Israel's character is due either to prejudice or to lack of historical perspective or to both.

Was not Spengler himself prejudiced when he robbed Israel of her cultural uniqueness? Was it not the Christian German speaking through him when he reduced biblical Israel to historical insignificance and elevated the appearance of Jesus to a great historical event? Is not this conception motivated by the same prejudice which has prompted the German Protestant commentators of the Bible to regard the Old Testament as a mere preparation for the New?

True, in rejecting Spengler's idea of the historical insignificance of Israel, the writer himself is open to the suspicion of being prejudiced. Is he not perhaps prompted by his national self-conceit as a Jew? It is futile to answer such a question. He can only give his assurance that he has approached the problem of Israel's fate with as much scientific detachment as possible, and that it is only after a careful examination of all the available evidence that he has come to his conclusions with regard to Israel's cultural character and fate. These conclusions are also based on the researches of serious historians and philologists, Jewish as well as gentile, whose findings diametrically contradict Spengler's views on Israel.

According to Spengler's conception of history, a Jew should be in a better position than a gentile to understand Israel's cultural character, but the fact that many generations divide us from biblical times, when Israel's culture flourished, make the matter elusive and difficult even for a Jew. It is doubtful whether the Jew of today

is capable of re-living Israel's cultural life of ancient times or of understanding the thoughts and feelings of such remote ancestors. The intervening historical events in his life and the influences exercised upon him by alien cultures and lands, must have changed his inner makeup and remoulded his cultural character. The claim of the Jews, therefore, to be the legitimate heirs of ancient Israel and the only authoritative interpreters of its cultural character has become questionable. It may be true, as some modern psychologists maintain, that they carry within themselves, in their so-called "collective subconsciousness," a record of all their past historical experiences, just as in our individual subconscious we preserve the experiences undergone in the course of our individual development. Consequently, it may be true that in the deep recesses of the soul of a contemporary Jew, the world and the life-feeling which animated his Israelitic ancestors, still remain hidden. The intellectual Jew of today, however, is spiritually much more a European than a Jew, and his "collective sub-consciousness," if it exists at all in reference to ancient Israel, is completely inhibited and repressed, though it may in certain ways still tinge his feelings, thoughts, and actions. Thus, a contemporary Jew has not much greater qualifications than a gentile for the intuitive interpretation of ancient Israel.

Both Jews and gentiles, in their efforts to understand the character of Israel's culture, are today dependent almost exclusively on the scientific analysis and interpretation of preserved historical documents and ascertained facts. A gentile scientist, provided he be impartial, is, by virtue of his superior scientific training, more reliable in this branch of science than a Jew without adequate scientific qualifications. Modern Hebrew philology and

critical commentaries of the Bible are predominantly the work of German scholars, and they have contributed to the scientific understanding of ancient Israel much more than Jewish scholars have done throughout the ages. Unfortunately, however, the former have not been unbiased, especially in regard to the latter periods of Israel's development, so that their conclusions are subject to well-founded suspicions and necessary rectifications.

Mindful of the difficulties attending the characterization of any culture, infallibility is not claimed in regard to the theory concerning Israel's cultural character as expounded here. Moreover, this theory is neither entirely new nor revolutionary. It is, however, more plausible and more in accordance with the known facts than that of Spengler. And considering the fact that the theory is also to a great extent conjectural, it is proposed only to give as brief an exposition of it as may be necessary to an understanding of the following chapters.

The most prominent form of expression of Israel's culture is *prophetism*. Those who believe that great nations are endowed by some supernatural power with a definite mission, would say that Israel's mission was to conceive prophetism, and to reveal it to mankind. It is unquestionably true that this trait of Israel's cultural character exhibits a certain affinity to the cultural traits of the Persians and the Arabs. It is, however, equally true that prophetism, as evolved by Israel, is of a specific character which distinguishes Israel's culture from *all* others.

Prophetism and the spiritual culture of ancient Israel are almost synonymous terms. The former is not only the purest and most specific but also almost the only significant form of expression of the latter. Whereas

Greek culture, for example, crystallized into many and diverse forms such as religion, poetry, plastic art, science, and philosophy, each of which is significant and of a high morphological value, ancient Israel found its cultural expression chiefly in prophetism, without which it would have been reduced to the same historical status as Edom or Moab.

When one deals with prophetism, it is not only the ideas, concepts, and activities of the great prophets that are referred to but also the spirit which has expressed itself in various forms during the whole of Israel's life-course, up to the time of exhaustion. The development of prophetism almost completely covers the development of Israel's culture. The works of the great prophets are merely mature expressions of Israel's prophetism.

It is significant that at the time of Israel's awakening, a prophet arose who was connected with a great historical event—Moses and the Exodus. Thus at the very outset, Jahweh revealed himself through His prophet as the guide of historical destiny. Whether Moses' life and Israel's deliverance from Egypt are historical facts or not, has little or no bearing on the subject. Whatever their authenticity may be, they are of vast historical significance. The fact that Israel invested them with such awe-inspiring prominence is sufficiently indicative of their significance. The story itself, in which the fundamental characteristics of Israel are already clearly discernible, represents Jahweh as the Lord of History and makes the prophet His legitimate mouthpiece.

Prophetism may be defined as Jahweh's spirit revealed through His prophets. Hence, Jahweh's character is identical with that of prophetism or of its synonym, Israel's cultural soul. "God did not create man; it was man



who created God"—according to this conception of Feuerbach's there are as many gods as men, the differentiation being much greater among gods of men of different cultures, than among individuals of one and the same culture. The conception of God reflects the character of individuals as well as of a nation's soul. Consequently, once we have comprehended the idea of God which a particular nation has conceived, we shall at the same time also have understood that nation's cultural character. This is applicable more especially to ancient Israel, whose uniqueness is determined almost exclusively by the prophetic God-idea which it conceived. The saying "God, Israel, and the Torah are one" is a psychological and historical truism, provided that by the term "Torah" we understand the totality of Israel's culture.

The fundamental trait in the character of Israel's God lies in His being the Lord of History. His other attributes are merely secondary and conditioned by this fundamental trait. By virtue of being Lord of History, Jahweh distinguishes Himself from all other gods. He reveals Himself, primarily, not in nature but in history. His first and foremost function is the direction of man's story, and not the dispensation of nature's gifts. It is true that He also assumes the role of God of Nature, but this is subordinate to His chief function, the shaping of human destiny. Hence it is not cultic worship, but morality in the widest sense that is the essential element of Israel's religion. Jahweh is not concerned with sacrifices or ritual service, but with the social and political affairs of His nation and of mankind. First and foremost, therefore, He demands deeds and not sacrifices, deeds of a moral character which are "good" in the historical sense. Worshipers of Baal believed that they were able to avert drought and



other natural disasters by offering sacrifices to their god of nature. Jahweh's mercy can be invoked only by moral conduct which is not confined to any particular province of life but which expresses itself in the totality of historical life. For this reason, Israel's religion is inseparable from civil law, as well as from other social and political affairs. Therein lies its great educational and moral force.

The conception of Jahweh as Lord of History is subject to a most significant development. Baal, as lord of the forces of nature, is as rigid and inflexible as the cycle of nature itself. Solid images of stone or wood are therefore fitting representations of Baal. Jahweh, Lord of History, on the other hand, is intangible and changeable as is history itself. He demands obedience to commandments of a moral character but, with the historical changes of national and social life, Jahweh and His commandments also change. Rigidity in any shape or form is alien to Him. What is regarded as good in one historical period, may appear in the next as bad. Therein also lies his abhorrence of concrete images.

This explains equally why Israel did not produce sculpture or any other branch of plastic art. It is generally assumed that the reason is to be found in the second of the ten commandments: "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image nor any manner of likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth." But why did Jahweh utter such a commandment, or why did Israel conceive a God abhorring images? Jahweh, manifesting the cultural soul of Israel, His creation, must in this commandment also have given a true expression of Israel's cultural character. Consequently, it was not a case of Israel failing to produce plastic art because of the second

commandment, but rather of Jahweh positing the second commandment because Israel, by reason of its character, was lacking in creative force in the field of plastic art. The historical sense for which Israel was distinguished, was a sense of continual change and everlasting transformation; and this was incompatible with the artistic sense as displayed by Greek sculptors. The Greeks excelled in plastic art, not because of the absence of Israel's second commandment, but rather because such a command would have been incompatible with their cultural soul. They distinguished themselves in their sense of the concrete and tangible, therefore they created plastic art; and their gods were concrete and tangible gods to whom Jahweh's second commandment would have seemed an incomprehensible monstrosity.

Is not this trait of Israel's nature also the reason why Israel's poetry is rhymeless and devoid of any fixed external form? The inner rhythm of Israel's lyrical and prophetic poetry, unfettered by external forms, seems to harmonize with the characteristic peculiarity of Israel's cultural soul. This historical dynamism of Israel as distinguished from the static character of the Greeks, is doubtless also responsible for the fact that the Hebrew language has no present tense. To a man with a keen historical sense, which is a sense of constant change, the present does not exist as a time. To him time is an uninterrupted historical flux and the idea of the present is incomprehensible. Israel's mind, by reason of this innate peculiarity, could comprehend only what had become in the past, or was in process of becoming, in the course of dynamic development. A true Israelite was blind to bodies or forces at rest, that is, to anything fixed in space or time. It was not the external beauty of a body or of a

poem that excited his imagination, but its inner moral force. It is not to be wondered, therefore, that Israel had no sculptors, no painters, no descriptive poets, and no science, but did possess in abundance prophets, lyrical poets, story-tellers, and chroniclers, whose great works testified to the unique genius of Israel.

The historical character of Israel's God also explains His one-ness. As Lord of History, Jahweh directs the destiny of His nation or, on a higher level, of mankind as a whole. At first He admits the actual existence of gods of other nations, albeit inferior to Himself, but within His nation His rule is absolute and He wages an uncompromising war against all rival gods. The belief in a god whose oneness is relative to a particular nation and land is called henotheism, in contradistinction to monotheism, which means a belief in one absolute God, Lord of the universe and all mankind.

Israel's belief in one God springs from the character of Jahweh as Lord of History, just as Greek polytheism springs from the character of Greek natural religion. The deification of the forces of nature is inherently polytheistic, because the multiplicity of natural forces necessitates a multiplicity of gods. The sense of the concrete and tangible ignores the inner relations between phenomena and events; it is blind to the dynamic character of life and nature. The Greek polytheistic pantheon therefore contains many gods personifying individual forces of nature and lacking inner inter-relation. They are tangible and concrete copies of natural forces as perceived by the peculiar Greek mind. On the other hand, Jahweh, by virtue of being God of History, is *one*. The historical oneness of a nation or of mankind necessitates one God. Leadership in times of war and peace

and guidance in social and political life, as conceived by Israel, admit of no other God. His oneness may be impaired only by the conflict between good and evil. It may have seemed irreconcilable that the ideal Ruler of social life should also be responsible for the many evils experienced in life. This may have given rise to the idea that the conflict between good and evil on earth reflects the struggle between a God of good and a God of evil. Mention may be made of how the author of the book of Job wrestled with this problem without succeeding in freeing himself from its tangles. The sufferings of the righteous, the prosperity of the wicked, and other similar experiences in individual and national life, have in the course of Israel's development threatened the absolute oneness of God and opened the door to dualism in Israel's God-idea. This dualism is not, however, a prime element in Israel's world-feeling, as it is in the religious conception of the Persians. Ahura Mazda, Persian god of light and good, and Ahriman, god of darkness and evil, are primary concepts of the Persian mind. The world-feeling of the Persians was innately dualistic, whereas that of Israel was distinctively monistic. When Israel came into contact with Persian dualism, its legitimate spokesman did not tire of proclaiming Jahweh creator of light as well as of darkness. Israel's dualism is of a secondary character and, comparatively, a very late derivation from the conception of God as Lord of History. It may be that the idea of Satan, the devil, as an independent power contending with God, is altogether an alien admixture of Israel's God-idea.

Spengler's conception of the character of Magian culture does not, therefore, cover Israel's God-idea. Beelzebub is mentioned by Spengler as a counterpart to Jahweh,



just as Ahriman is a counterpart to Ahura Mazda, but that parallelism is obviously forced and is not consistent with historical facts. Beelzebub was a baal of Ekron and has as much to do with Israel's Jahweh as all the other baals against whose rivalry He fought. Ahriman, in whom darkness and evil were deified, was an inseparable counterpart to Ahura Mazda, god of light and good, whereas Beelzebub was of alien origin and incompatible with Israel's conception of God. Later on Beelzebub, probably under Persian influence, may have assumed some of Ahriman's traits, but in the whole course of the development of Israel's God-idea, from its rise until it matured in the works of the great masters of prophetism, there is no indication whatever that he was a counterpart to Jahweh.

There is, however, no doubt that Israel's life and world conception has many more points of contact with the religion of the Persians than with that of the Greeks. The latter's polytheism was, as has been shown, diametrically opposed to the fundamentals of Israel's cultural character. The Alexandrian attempt to reconcile Hellenism and Judaism was, as we shall see, a rationalistic speculation characteristic of a culturally decaying age. To the prophets, Greek polytheism would have been totally incomprehensible. The fact that there was, to some extent, an intimate interrelation and interaction between Persian culture and that of Israel suggests an inner affinity between the two, though, in regard to the fundamental idea, they too were worlds apart, especially in biblical times.

It has been contended in some quarters that the prophets cannot be regarded as the legitimate representatives of Israel's culture, because they were but few and because they were, moreover, misunderstood by the overwhelming majority of their people. This argument



is untenable in view of the fact that all cultures express themselves in the works of only a few exceptional men. There were, among the Greeks, comparatively few sculptors, poets, and philosophers, and yet these few are the acknowledged representatives of Greek culture. Neither is the fact that the prophets were persecuted an extraordinary phenomenon. Were not the Greek philosophers also condemned and put to death? The most pathetic tragedy of Israel's prophets lay in the circumstance that, as spokesmen of the Lord of History, their mission was to shape the religious, social, and political life of their nation. They had to criticize, exhort, and threaten all those whose social behavior was not in conformity with Jahweh's will. No wonder, then, that they were not left in peace.

There are some who seek to minimize the spiritual value of the contributions of Israel's prophets on the ground that many of their prophecies have not come true. This argument is based on a misconception of the character of the prophets. Their mission was not to foretell the future. They were not fortune-tellers like the oracles of Apollo at Delphi, but messengers of the Lord of History and, as such, they were guides of national and human destiny. Their exclusive calling was to instruct their people in the matter of moral behavior. It is true that they did also foretell the future, but their forecasts were of a secondary character and not ends in themselves. In order to encourage the people or to make them realize the evil of their ways, the prophets stimulated their imagination by visions of future happenings. It was for this reason that almost all prophetic forecasts were conditional upon the conduct of the people. Pro-

phetic predictions were merely means to an end. The promise of reward or the threat of punishment was their chief content. Their object was not to foretell the future, but to further the cause of Jahweh, Lord of History.

The above is an attempt to interpret the nature of Israel's culture by the application of Spengler's morphological methods. It has resulted in the conviction that the conclusions arrived at are much more satisfactory than the views of Spengler himself on Israel. His disregard of Israel as a people of distinctive culture is inexplicable. In the following outline of Israel's life-course, it will be more especially shown that Israel's prophetism has passed through those definite periods of development which are comprised in the basic idea of Spengler as to the life-course of all cultures. This will more forcibly disprove Spengler's contention that pre-exilic Israel consisted merely "of Edomitic tribes which, together with Moabites, Amalekites, Ishmaelites, and others, formed a fairly homogeneous Hebrew-speaking population living in the sphere of the old Babylonian civilization." It will be shown that Israel, on the contrary, had an independent life-course, parallel to that of any other culture.

Before this chapter is concluded emphasis must again be laid upon the great difficulties with which a discussion of Israel's cultural character is beset. It is difficult to avoid resorting to sweeping abstractions and generalizations, the validity of which is not easy to verify. Possibly, the chief term used in this chapter—Lord of History—does not convey the exact idea of Jahweh's nature. Ideas might, moreover, be associated with this term which were alien to the mind of ancient Israel. Although Israel's God-idea, as interpreted here, may to a certain extent be con-

jectural, this interpretation is nevertheless an indispensable prerequisite to an understanding of the life-course of Israel's culture.

The problem of the *birth* of Israel's culture had to be left open for lack of scientifically reliable references. The problem of the *character* of Israel's culture has proved to be more amenable to scientific analysis, although it cannot be said that the conclusions reached even on this subject are incontestable. The further problem of the *life-course* of Israel's culture is of a much more scientific nature. Any theory on the subject must not only cover all attested facts, but must also stand the test of comparison with the life-course of other cultures.

## VI. ISRAEL'S LIFE-COURSE

The prehistoric period of all peoples is veiled in obscurity. This also applies to Israel, in spite of the fact that ancient Israel has handed down a literature which abounds in historical reminiscences of the time when it still lived a nomadic life. The historicity of these traditional stories has been questioned by historians and not without justification, but recent excavations and serious research work have conclusively proved that many biblical stories which were thought to be of a purely legendary character do, in fact, contain a historical kernel. It has been ascertained that even the stories of Israel's ancient patriarchs are in essence historical, except that the latter do not represent individual persons but clans or tribes. A marriage may mean the union of two tribes and the birth of a child, the birth of a new tribe.

These achievements of biblical research are, however, of little interest to us when dealing with the cultural development of Israel. For in pre-historic times the nomadic life of the Israelitic tribes was more or less identical with that of any of the Semitic tribes which long wandered between the Euphrates and the Nile, searching and fighting for grazing places and springs of water, or invading neighboring civilized countries upon which they looked down with the pride and contempt of the nomad. In the light of historical morphology, such a life is seen to be of no historical significance. It is eventless and timeless. It may continue forever without significant change. It

is only from the moment when a people wakes up to self-realization and elevates itself from the plane of nomadic life that history begins. Moreover, we are not interested in what the Israelitish tribes had in common with other tribes, but rather in what distinguished them from all others.

This brings us to the question when Israel's history began. Childhood is the time of wandering, with only a dim premonition of a great future. The European peoples, according to Spengler, went through this stage during the period of their migrations till the tenth century. Which period in Israel's history corresponds to the childhood stage? Obviously, it is that of the peregrinations of the Semitic tribes prior to Israel's conquest of Canaan. The Israelitish tribes, like the European peoples prior to their cultural awakening, were at that time still wandering as in a dream, but there was already within them an active organism out of which Israel's culture emerged, struggling and growing.

The conquest of the Promised Land and the cultural ascendancy of Israel seem to have been miraculous, considering Israel's numerical and cultural inferiority in relation to Egypt and Babylon, but Spengler's interpretation of history gives a satisfactory explanation of this miracle. How did it come about that the Roman Empire failed to repel the Germanic and other primitive tribes, and why did she collapse under their onslaught? Why did the Babylonian Empire, with her population of about fifty million, become an easy prey to Cyrus, leader of a few hundred thousand Persians, and why did the Hyksos succeed in overrunning Egypt, and the Christians Moorish Spain? It was for the very same reasons that Israel was able to defy Egypt and to invade Canaan, which was



inhabited by a civilized population and ruled by kings under the overlordship of Egypt.

Highly civilized empires lose the power of resistance because their vitality and vigor have been sapped and dried up in the course of their cultural development. They are exhausted and decayed. Primitive peoples, with their ruthless vigor, do not therefore have much difficulty in breaking such empires up and in imposing their will upon them. However, political victors are not necessarily victorious in the cultural field. The political victor must always face the danger that he may himself be culturally defeated.

It was in precisely such relationship that the awakening Israelitish tribes stood to the kingdoms of Canaan with their Egyptian overlord. The Babylonian and Egyptian civilizations which dominated Canaan had long since entered upon the stage of cultural exhaustion and decline. The achievements of Babylonian civilization, material as well as spiritual, had spread throughout the then known world. The Babylonian language was the international and diplomatic tongue; Hammurabi's legal code was generally known and studied. Nevertheless, Babylon had in the meantime been overrun by various peoples, her civilized population being unable to offer any serious resistance. No wonder, therefore, that Babylon had long since lost her political influence over Canaan, although her civilization was still predominant. A similar position also developed as regards the relationship between Canaan and Egypt. The Tell-el-Amarna tablets, found in the archives of the Egyptian kings, show the value of this relationship in a most vivid light. They consist mostly of the diplomatic correspondence of Kings Amenhotep III and IV, who ruled from the end of the fifteenth until

the middle of the fourteenth century. Of great interest to us are the letters sent by the city kings of Canaan to their nominal overlord, the King of Egypt. The vassals besought him to help them against the onslaught of invaders from the north and east (we have here an analogous story to that related by Tacitus about the invasion of the Roman Empire from the north by Germanic tribes). Egypt made no move. Her king was more interested in religious speculations than in the practical government of his dominion. The defence of the empire had been placed in the hands of self-seeking generals and mercenaries of alien origin—exactly as in Rome prior to her collapse. The result was that the kings of Canaan ceased to bother about Egypt and managed their affairs as best they could.

It is interesting to note that in the futile complaints of the Egyptian vassals in Canaan recorded in the Tell-el-Amarna tablets the "Chabiru" are mentioned as a people making vigorous attempts to invade Canaan. These Chabiru are thought to have been identical with the biblical Hebrews, Israel belonging to this group of invaders. Be that as it may, it is indisputable that it was at about that time that Israel's onslaught on Canaan began.

The population of the land, at the time of Israel's invasion and conquest, was predominantly, but not exclusively Semitic. On the coast, the Philistines had established themselves. They had been driven from Crete and together with other sea people had attacked Egypt, but had been repelled by Rameses III. On their retreat, they had settled in Canaan and set out to conquer the land. In the north, they had met with Hittites and checked their expanding power. In the east they had collided with Israel and for about a century had fought

with them for supremacy. The racial origin of both the Philistines and the Hittites is doubtful. They were not Semites, and if they were not originally Aryans, they must at any rate have had an admixture of Aryan blood, especially the Philistines. Later on they became assimilated, and like the Canaanites, were absorbed in Israel.

Thus the old Semitic inhabitants of Canaan, the newly arrived Bedouin tribes from the desert, and the Philistines and Hittites, who were of alien stock, had contributed to the diversities of beliefs, rites, and customs of the land in pre-Israelitish times; but Babylon and Egypt, as the highest and most developed civilizations, were spiritually predominant. They then played the same role as did Greek civilization from the time of Alexander and as European civilization does today. Politically they were losing ground, but their civilization was spreading and influencing the life of other peoples.

In short, the world situation at the time of Israel's ascent to historical life, was as follows. Babylon was in a state of decay and overrun from all sides by alien peoples. Egypt could only protect her frontiers with the aid of foreign mercenaries. In the absence of any world power to hold them in check, the nomadic tribes turned restive and broke into activity. Their migrations became a source of anxiety to the civilized communities of settled countries. Canaan, as one of the latter, lay an easy prey to any "young" peoples bent on conquest. The Children of Israel, who happened to be on the spot, grasped this historical opportunity, conquered the land, and out of the union between Israel and Canaan there arose, in constant struggle, Israel's culture.

By reason of the lack of sufficient documentary evidence, it would be very difficult to fix the exact date of

Israel's great awakening from the dreams of childhood. It seems that in the time of Moses (middle of the thirteenth century), the tribes of Israel began to become, though still dimly, conscious of a common idea. They conceived Jahweh as God of Israel and submitted themselves to His rule. From then on the God-idea which had dawned upon them underlay the very existence of Israel and ran through its whole life-course. The idea of Jahweh as God of History was still of a primitive character, but it already contained all the essential elements of the God-idea of Israel's great prophets. He was the Lord of History, though as yet regarded as guiding the destiny of Israel only. He was exclusively one, though in relation to his people only, and naturally He was also incorporeal.

It has been pointed out that at the time of Israel's invasion of Canaan, monotheism had already been familiar in Egypt. The question therefore arises whether Israel did not acquire the God-idea from Egypt. It is unquestionably true that the Egyptian philosophers had attained to the idea of monotheism. In a great hymn (still preserved) Amenhotep IV, who reigned until 1358 B. C., speaks of Aton as the only world god, besides whom there is no other. Egyptian monotheism, however, was entirely different from that of the Israelitish tribes. The former was the product of cold, rationalistic speculation lacking inner force. It was merely one of those abstract philosophic systems in which all advanced civilizations have abounded. Israel's monotheism, or rather henotheism, was on the other hand a direct expression of its cultural soul. It was a living and impelling force. Even if it be a fact that Israel had been influenced by Egyptian philosophical ideas, which possibility is by no means ruled out, such influence would have been only of a limited



historical significance and analogous to that which has repeatedly come into play when young peoples have achieved contact with mature civilizations. With the vigor of primitive peoples and with their specific world-feeling, the young peoples adopt and remould foreign ideas and concepts. The fate of the ideas of Christianity and antiquity when adopted by primitive European peoples, and of Marxism when adopted by the "young" Russian people, are analogous to that of Egyptian monotheism when adopted by Israel. In all these cases, the "old" foreign ideas have undoubtedly stimulated and facilitated (Spengler would say hindered) the cultural development of those who adopted them, but their inner character has at the same time undergone a significant change. Just as the Christianity of the European peoples of the Middle Ages was different from the Jewish "primitive" Christianity, so was the monotheism of primitive Israel different from that of the Egyptian philosophers.

The same applies also to the other influences on Israel which emanated from Egypt and Babylon. The Babylonian and Egyptian cosmogonies, the old Babylonian Gilgamish epics and legends on the flood, Hammurabi's great legal code, had certainly exercised an influence on Israel similar to Amenhotep's monotheism. They had stimulated Israel's cultural development and influenced her forms of expression. The biblical cosmogonies, stories of the flood, legal codes, were inwardly different from the literary works of the Babylonians dealing with similar subject matter. They differed in world-feeling and forms of expression as much as the plastic art, poetry, and architecture of the "young" European peoples differed from those of antiquity or of Moorish Spain. Thus, whatever cultural influences had been exercised on Israel, her cul-



tural development was as truly unique as that of any other people of a great culture.

Until the eighth century, Israel passed through that period of youth which corresponds to the early stage of a culture. It is the heroic period of Judges and the early kingdom. Israel was ruthless in the wars against its enemies. War was not yet regarded as inhuman, but as the very breath of life. Thanks to its primitive vigor, Israel either mercilessly exterminated its enemies, or else absorbed them. The tribal constitution of Israel gradually vanished, giving way to local communities formed by the welding of tribes, which accompanied the transition to agricultural life. Social life centered round the market places and at the gates of villages or small towns. Feudalism was gradually established. Wealthy landlords came into being. The "commercial Jews" of that time were Canaanites, Phoenicians, or Egyptians, that is to say, "old" peoples. The primitive estates, the nobles and priests, ruled the people and were trustees of law and custom.

Culturally and spiritually, this period marked the springtime during which the new world-feeling broke through and flourished. Instinct, rooted in race and soil, was the creative force also in the spiritual sphere. Hymns and war songs, tales and epics were of a style and force such as have never recurred.

Unfortunately, very little of this ancient literature has been preserved in its original form. The names of two books survive—"The Books of Jahweh's Wars" and "The Book of the Brave," mentioned in the Bible. They were without doubt collections of songs and hymns, sung by wandering bards and minstrels. Deborah's hymn, preserved almost intact, is indicative of the spirit and of the

great creative forces which were at work in Israel during that epoch. It is not only a jewel of the old Hebraic literature but also a powerful manifestation of the prophetic spirit of Israel's youth. Deborah is a characteristic representative of the prophetism of her time and therefore deserved the title of "prophetess" which tradition has awarded to her. In her passionate appeal to Israel to serve Jahweh in a merciless crusade against His and His people's enemies—Baal and the Canaanites—in her fiery enthusiasm, uncompromising spirit, and powerful language she is the legitimate mouthpiece of Jahweh in His youth.

There was nevertheless still a very great difference between the prophetism of Deborah and that of the great masters of Israel's prophecy. During this stage of development, Jahweh was still the tribal God, unscrupulous, zealous, and remorseless. His messengers sang the songs of "Jahweh's Wars" and inspired his people to a holy crusade against His enemies. The merciless extermination of all adversaries and rival gods was Jahweh's chief purpose during this heroic period. Naturally, Israel's God reflected the mentality, ideas, and aspirations of His people; and like other peoples during this stage of cultural development, Israel in its youth was ruthless, vigorous, and merciless against all enemies. Under its chiefs, called judges and later kings, Israel conquered Canaan, spreading blood and desolation. Bands of roving prophets and minstrels roamed through the land, keeping ablaze in the hearts of their people Jahweh's wrath against Baal and the offenders against His immutable laws.

The later prophets of this period continued to be animated by the same spirit, though they came nearer to the ideas of the great prophets. Samuel rebuked Saul for hav-

ing spared the king of the Amalekites and their cattle. The prophet Elijah in his zeal for Jahweh is reported to have slain single-handed four hundred and fifty prophets of a rival god. Moral considerations in a modern sense did not at that time exist. It was the period in Israel's life-course corresponding to the Crusades and Middle Ages. Israel, in the time of Judges and early Kings, like the peoples of European culture in the time of the Crusades, was remorseless, and instinctively vigorous. The spiritual works of this period exhibit similar characteristics. From these "dark ages," the higher forms of cultural expression emerged in a direct line of development. As the Baroque evolved from the Gothic, so the prophetism of the great masters emerged from the "primitive" prophetism of a Deborah, Samuel, and Elijah. The same world feeling was expressed in both. The difference between them was determined merely by the degree of development. Jahweh was consistently the Lord of History and his commands were always of a historically moral character. He demanded not sacrifices but deeds, and actions which were good in a political and social sense. It was only the conception of what is good that changed.

When Saul returned from a successful war against the Amalekites and offered sacrifice to Jahweh, the prophet Samuel thundered at him wrathfully: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in hearkening to the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." What then was the guilt of this unfortunate king that Jahweh should have turned away from him and looked for a better man to lead his people? It was not the oppression of the widow and the orphan, or the enslavement of the poor and needy, or bribery and other similar

forms of social corruption—the chief evils against which the great prophets raised their voices. Saul's offence was that of having spared the life of Agag and of allowing his own warriors to carry away the cattle of the Amalekites. Measured by later moral ideals, such an action would be regarded as a virtue rather than a transgression, but at the period of Jahweh's holy crusades it was an unforgivable sin to lavish pity on an enemy or to covet his possessions, which were taboo. Yet Samuel's exhortations were as characteristic of Israel's prophetism as the exhortatory sermons of the great prophets. Both the primitive and the great later prophets emphatically proclaimed that to obey is better than to bring sacrifice. The Jahweh of both was concerned with the political and social conduct of His people rather than with the fat of rams. Only the view of what constituted proper political and social conduct underwent a change in the course of natural development. The Jahweh of Deborah, Samuel, and Elijah demanded primarily the utter destruction of His rival gods and the remorseless extermination of their worshipers. The chief concern of Amos' and Isaiah's God, on the other hand, was to eradicate corruption and to remedy economic and social evils.

The transition from the earlier to the later prophets was not abrupt. The primitive prophetism became more and more spiritual until it reached its purest and highest expression in the works of the great masters.

The works of the prophets were not the only form of expression of Israel's prophetism. The inimitable compositions of narrative poets and novelists in the early stage of Israel's culture manifested the same creative powers. The story of Joseph, for example, was a masterpiece of prophetic art. Its psychological insight, perfect composi-



tion, charming simplicity, gripping inwardness, and dramatic vividness, made the story immortal. The five books of Moses and the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel abound in such stories. Many others have undoubtedly been lost. Almost all the epics, folk lore, legends, and tales produced during this early stage of Israel's development bore irrefutable testimony to Israel's great creative powers, characteristic of this period. They were not merely literature in the modern sense of the term but life embodied in living words. Together with the old hymns and war songs they were of the same order as the Homeric epics of the Greeks and the Eddas of the West. All these were "contemporary" works of different cultures.

The fact that the themes of some of the biblical stories were of foreign origin (mainly Babylonian) did not detract from the originality of Israel's genius. Was Michael Angelo any the less original because biblical stories supplied him with many themes for his paintings?

We now come to the epoch of maturity of Israel or, in Spengler's terminology, Israel's late culture. After a period of childhood, which terminated with Israel's conquest of Canaan in the thirteenth century, and after the subsequent heroic period of youth, which terminated in the eighth century, the climax of the development of Israel's culture was reached. The period of *childhood* was, as in the case of all other peoples, a period of migrations and visionary gropings for self-realization. In the period of *youth*, Israel awoke and with youthful vigor and vitality asserted itself. In the period of *maturity*, Israel's culture achieved its highest and purest expression. The creative forces were still deeply intuitive. The centre



of spiritual activity shifted from the countryside and small towns to megalopolis, where, after a short period of greatest and most intensive spiritual activity, the megalopolitan spirituality transformed itself into civilization. It was the summer-time of Israel's cultural life-course, when prophetism ripened in the works of great masters until all its potentialities were actualized and finally exhausted.

Before dealing with the mature forms of prophetism, we must turn our attention to the economic, political, and social conditions in which Israel lived at that period.

The cultural character of nations, like that of individuals, becomes moulded and shaped in the course of their incessant struggles. In the preceding period, Israel's struggle had been directed chiefly against the external enemy: the Canaanitic peoples who refused to surrender, the Semitic tribes of the East who, following Israel's example, were repeatedly attempting to invade the West Jordanland, and the Philistines who set out to conquer Canaan from the west. If it had not been for these wars, Israel would have fallen victim to assimilation, as was the case with other Semitic tribes. This danger of assimilation or pseudomorphosis, as Spengler would call it, was ever present. Thanks therefore to these wars, which were at the same time also Jahweh's holy crusades, Israel's cultural character took shape. This does not, however, imply that the wars determined that cultural character. The prime elements of Israel's culture were potentially inherent and the external factors, political as well as economic, merely brought them into light. How many peoples have been culturally thwarted by reason of the absence of suitable external stimuli, and

how many peoples have remained culturally barren in spite of great external events in their political and economic life?

Under the influence of external stimuli Israel's cultural soul developed its highest forms of expression during the period of maturity. In response to the events which had taken place in the life of His people on one hand and to the world-historic events of that time on the other, Jahweh, Lord of History, was gradually transformed into the universal ruler of mankind and the moral guide of social life. National henotheism gave place to the highest possible ethical monotheism, beyond which no further development is imaginable. Let us now examine these economic, social, and political conditions to which the great prophets responded with such unexampled magnificence.

The natural economic development of Israel produced, during this period, social conflicts analogous to those recorded in the history of all other peoples at the corresponding cultural level. Exploitation of the lower classes, insatiable greed of the rich, perversion of justice, licentiousness and debauchery, bribery and usury have always attended economic individualism. The latter has always dissolved the old customs of communal life, conditioned by primitive economy. Money begins to rule and it buys not only goods, slaves, and pleasures, but also justice and God's favors.

The picture drawn by the great prophets illustrates most vividly the economic and social conditions which prevailed in their time. A few quotations, therefore, from the prophets are more illuminating than a detailed discourse on this subject: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there be no room."

"O, ye that would swallow the needy and destroy the poor of the land. Saying when will the new moon be gone that we may sell grain and the Sabbath that we may set forth corn, making the ephah small and the shekel great and falsifying the balances of deceit." "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine and men of strength to mingle strong drinks, that justify the wicked for a reward and take away the righteousness from him." "Yea, that lie upon beds of ivory and stretch themselves upon their couches and eat the lambs out of the flock and the calves out of the midst of the stall." "The daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go and making a tinkling with their feet."

This picture reminds us of the city life of all economically advancing peoples. The economic as well as cultural centre of gravitation shifted to big cities like Samaria and Jerusalem. The urban population increased with the development of commerce and trade, and the gulf between city and countryside widened more and more. The simple folk of the villages and small towns remained sound at heart, but they suffered under the growing tension of economic conditions. They were ruled from the city by self-seeking nobles, landlords, usurers, priests, judges, and officials, and they were helpless. Even the religious life gradually became centralized in the capital, to the detriment of life in the countryside. In general, the city set the standard. Jerusalem of this period reminds us of Athens of the fifth and fourth centuries, and of Paris of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The political world situation at the time of the great prophets was also stimulating. Previously Israel had been confronted with and had fought against peoples of

limited political importance. Now they had to contend with world powers—such as Assyria and later, neo-Babylon—which together with Egypt wrestled with one another for world supremacy. In this collision of world empires, Israel was eventually crushed and her political life interrupted until the Maccabean revolt. The northern kingdom, including Samaria, was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 B. C. E. and the southern, including Jerusalem, in 586, by the Babylonians. This political disaster befell Israel unexpectedly because her short-sighted rulers had not appreciated the significance of world historic events or the co-relation of the various political factors obtaining at that time. Whether Israel could have been saved in the teeth of the expansionist drives of mighty empires is doubtful, but the fact remains that Israel's rulers did not realize the prevailing political constellation of forces and consequently blundered in their external diplomatic relations. Moreover, popular faith in the invincibility of Jahweh, who was believed to be inseparable from His people and country, made the Israelites and their rulers blind to the dangers which threatened their national existence. Did not Jahweh receive sufficient sacrifices and offerings? Why should He give up his people? This henotheistic idea of Jahweh was conservative and the form of worship Canaanitic. As we have seen, it was the God-idea of the primitive prophets who conceived Jahweh as the God of Israel fighting for His people and country. After Israel had settled down to agricultural life, Jahweh, Lord of History, assumed also the functions of the baals, and accepted sacrifices for lack of any other adequate distinctively Israelitish form of worship. Sacrifices have, however, always been regarded by legitimate spokesmen of Jahweh as of second-



ary importance or else condemned altogether. The festivals connected with the life of the peasants had also been adopted from the Canaanites, but they were given a historical interpretation in order to reconcile them with Israel's character.

Now let us see how the Jahweh of the great masters reacted to the economic, social, political, and religious life of His people, and to what heights the God-idea of the classic prophets attained. In this connection let the prophets themselves again speak: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and with the fat of fed beasts and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of he-goats." "I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly." "When you make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood." "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow," exclaims Isaiah. Amos, his junior, exhorts, "Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs and let me not hear the melody of thy psalteries, but let justice well up as waters and righteousness as mighty streams. Did you bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O House of Israel?"

Sacrifices are rejected, and prayers offered up by evil doers are condemned. What Jahweh demands is only "to do justice and to love mercy and to go humbly with thy Lord." These admonitions do not concern rites or ceremonials. They deal rather with economic, social, and religious behavior as manifested in the human relations of everyday life. Jahweh *always* demanded deeds and



actions of a historical character, but whereas during the preceding period he had demanded ruthless extermination of rival peoples and gods, *now*, with the dissolution of old customs and with increasing economic conflicts and moral corruption, his chief concern was the moral purification of the economic and social conduct of his people. True, the Jahweh of "primitive" prophetism had also been the regulator of social life and the custodian of moral laws, as the decalogue, old folk stories, and the activities of some of the "primitive" prophets testify. As the prevailing norms of social conduct had, however, still been primitive and generally adhered to, this element in Jahweh's character had not been capable of actualization but had remained latent. But now, in reaction to complex city life, it found its proper expression. As Lord of History, Jahweh now combated chiefly economic and social evils, and in this holy crusade against corruption and immorality, his character became spiritualized and completely consummated. He was no longer concerned so much with the political expansion of his people as with their moral perfection. Saul had been rebuked and punished because he had not been sufficiently zealous and cruel in the crusade against the Amalekites, whereas the great prophets threatened Israel with destruction because the rich oppressed the poor and needy, judges took bribes, priests fattened on sacrifices, and false prophets cried "peace" when their "teeth had something to bite" (that is, when they received payment).

In response to the world historic events of that time, the great masters of prophetism released Jahweh from His national limitations and made Him the *universal* ruler of mankind. "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel, saith the Lord. Have not

I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt and the Philistines from Caphtor and Aram from Kir?" Thus did the prophet shatter the popular illusion that the mighty and invincible Jahweh was inseparable from Israel and the land. True that Jahweh knew Israel better than other nations, but this preferential position of Israel imposed the obligation of setting an example in economic and social behavior, and if it failed in this respect, Israel would share the fate of the Ethiopians, Philistines, and Aram. The laws and commandments of Jahweh were universal and binding upon everybody without distinction of race or nationality. *All* other nations had been and would be punished for sins of a moral nature—"Damascus because they have thrashed Gilead with sledges of iron; Tyre because they remember not the brotherly covenant; Edom because he cast off all pity and kept his wrath forever; Ammon because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead that they might enlarge their border; Moab because he burned the bones of the kings of Edom in lime." So will Judah be punished, "because they have rejected the law of the Lord, and Israel because they sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes." Assyria, the world power, was the rod of Jahweh's anger, but she, too, was doomed because of her conceit and vain pride.

It is certain that Jahweh was, also during this period, incorporeal. With what fine irony the prophet ridicules the worship of images! A man "planteth a bay tree and the rain doth nourish it. Then a man useth it for fuel . . . the half thereof he burneth in the fire . . . he roasteth roast and is satisfied, yea he warmeth himself and saith, 'Aha, I am warm, I have seen fire,' and the residue thereof he maketh a god. He falleth down unto it and wor-

shippeth and prayeth unto it and saith, 'Deliver me for thou art my God.' "

That these great prophets were still emotionally attached to their people and were deeply concerned with Israel's fate, that is to say, that they were still national patriots, does not detract from the greatness of their spiritual achievements. On the contrary, this fact proves that they were not merely abstract thinkers, rootless rationalists, or romantic mystics. Abstract rationalistic thinking and sentimental romanticism are characteristic phenomena of a later period when culture is transformed into civilization. The Israel of the great masters was still in the *cultural* stage of development. It had not yet become rationalistic or sentimental. Its creative forces were intuitive rather than intellectual. The great prophets were "contemporaries" of the masters produced by every great culture at the corresponding period, and not of the rationalistic thinkers who belonged to the following one. They were attached with deep roots to the life of their people and to the soil of their country, and they drew from these their creative forces. It is no wonder then that they shared intensely the joys and sorrows of their brethren. Their visions of Israel's future were, for the same reason, neither abstract nor sentimental, but real in the historical sense. In these visions they expressed a hope which was the inevitable spiritual result of Israel's mature world-feeling. "And it shall come to pass in the end of days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established at the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow unto it and many peoples shall go and say: Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways and we

will walk in his path . . . for out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and He shall judge between the nations and shall decide for many peoples, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations shall not lift up sword against nations, neither shall they learn war any more."

What a divergence from Deborah's or Samuel's God-idea! From the exaltation of war with all its cruelties and devastations to the lofty visions of world peace with Israel as the light of nations! Remove the national element from this vision and you deprive it of its soul. The rationalists and cosmopolitan pacifists of today have a better thought out picture of the future world state, but their conceptions, not being the creations of intuitive forces but products of abstract intelligence, lack the vigor and vitality of the prophetic visions. Thus from the primitive impulsive nationalism of the preceding period was evolved the lofty and enlightened nationalism of the great masters. Narrow nationalistic tendencies, based on ideas of racial purity, and chauvinistic self-conceit did not arise until the next period. This development of Israel's nationalism runs parallel with that of all other peoples. So in Europe also, modern nationalistic ideas have been conceived and propagated only since the French Revolution, that is, since the beginning of Western civilization.

Prophetic religion is a religion of life in its totality, and like life itself it is indivisible. Although it was necessary, for the sake of clarity, to discuss economic, social, and political problems separately, they are, in fact, inseparable parts of an organic whole.

Thus the conclusion has been reached that the universal



ethical monotheism of the great masters represented the consummation of Israel's cultural soul. In it, all the possibilities of Israel's prophetism were exhausted and, in fact, Israel has produced no works since then that can stand comparison with the works of these great prophets. Israel's intuitive creativeness then reached its climax; and this fact is also manifested in the linguistic style in which the great prophets expressed their ideas. The vigorous flow of speech, the natural metaphors and inner rhythm and harmony, have never been surpassed since. This powerful style which defies classification (prose-poetry) was as much the creation of prophetic intuition as of the ideas expressed in it. The ideas and the linguistic forms cannot be divorced from one another. Later generations understood the rules of Hebrew grammar much better than did the prophets, but, lacking the intuitively creative forces of the prophets, they never even approached the rugged beauty of their style. Thus the development of the Hebrew language also symbolizes Israel's life-course.

When did the period of Israel's maturity terminate? Spengler allows for this epoch about three hundred years. Although the sub-division of cultural life-courses cannot be regarded as rigid, nevertheless the length of Israel's period of maturity does more or less correspond to Spengler's scheme. It lasted from about the eighth until the fifth century. The destruction of Israel in 586 disturbed its natural development, although afterwards it still produced some works which may be counted among the classics.

In any case, soon after the destruction a new spirit began to prevail. The creative forces of Israel's culture began to deteriorate and, at their expense, the intellect



gradually rose as the determining factor of megalopolitan spirituality. The works of Ezekiel and the last prophets already showed traces of the speculative spirit. Their ideas and visions assumed a rationalistic character like that of the apocalyptic writers. Their religion was no longer a religion of life. Their insistence on the externals of religious practice and the study of the Lord's word reminds us of the spirit of the scribes rather than of the great prophets. The transformation of Israel's culture into civilization was gradual and, though signs of the latter are traceable far back, the beginning of a new epoch may be fixed at the fifth century (Ezra, the scribe).

Thus from Deborah, representative type of Israel's youth, through Amos and Isaiah, great masters of Israel's maturity, we come to Ezra, prototype of Israel's intellectual teachers of its old age. After the spring when nature awakens and flourishes, and the summer when the fruits ripen, comes autumn, when the fruits of the past season rot or are collected and conserved for the cold winter.

## VII. JUDAISM—ISRAEL'S CIVILIZATION

In Chapter IV, the idea of Israel as a distinctly specific cultural entity was expounded; the preceding chapter contains a brief outline of the development of Israel's culture in its early and later stages, corresponding to the ages of youth and maturity. So Spengler's contention that the Jews represent one of the nations of Magian culture and that the pre-exilic life of Israel is of no historical significance was found to be inconsistent with the known historical facts. Now it remains to be demonstrated that, in old age also, Israel expressed itself in forms analogous to those in which other cultures have expressed themselves. The problem of Israel's civilization is of the greatest importance in this connection, as Spengler bases on its interpretation—or rather misinterpretation—his whole conception of Magian culture, in which he includes both Judaism and Christianity. The following interpretation of Israel's civilization, in the light of Spengler's *Historical Morphology*, destroys this basis; and thus Spengler's conception of Magian culture, with all its implications, becomes untenable.

By way of analogy to Hellenism, Israel's civilization will here be called Judaism. Just as Hellenism, beginning with Alexander the Great, in succession to Greek culture, represents Greek civilization, so Judaism since Ezra represents *Israel's* civilization. Hellenism and Judaism are "contemporary" civilizations (the actual age difference is only about one century—Hellenism commencing in

the fourth and Judaism in the fifth century B. C. E.) and it will be shown that they manifest analogous traits.

For the sake of greater lucidity, a brief account will again be given of Spengler's definition of spiritual civilization, and this by almost literal quotations from his own books.

Culture and civilization represent respectively the living body of a soul and the mummy of it. The one consists of life developed by growth from within in one great uninterrupted process of evolution, and the other comprises the autumnal, artificial, and rootless life of great cities under forms fashioned by the intellect. Among civilized nations, peasantry of the soil is of no account. The megalopolis uproots, absorbs, and consumes it. With the vanishing of the gentry and the priesthood, the peasant is the only remaining relic of early culture. Culture and civilization—the organism born of mother earth and the mechanism proceeding from the hardened fabric! The scientific accomplishments of Galileo, Kepler, and Newton were *deeds*, whereas the efforts of modern physicists represent scientific *work*. The city intelligentsia, productive of abstract systems and conflicting programs, abhors the man of destiny and withdraws itself from the realities of historical life. Inward religion and metaphysical philosophy are extinct, and revolutionary preaching, novel writing, and lecture-room jargon take their place. Only *extensive* possibilities remain. To the educated, mysteries are indications of ignorance. The new religion, devoid of mysteries, is called wisdom. Its priest is the "philosopher" and its disciples are the educated. Virtue is knowledge. The "wise man" or sage is the great ideal of the educated. He may go "back to nature" but he cannot change his megalopolitan character. His asceticism

really means contempt for the world for the sake of meditation. Virtue, as the background of wisdom, is a kind of secret pleasure, a fine spiritual egoism whereby the self-satisfied moralist becomes a Philistine. In this scholasticism of "common sense" and "middle course" as one may call it, there must of inner necessity be included the rationalistic mysticism of the educated, which may manifest itself in great rationalistic visions and fantastic religious worlds. Mechanized life would be incomplete without the urge to get rid, for the time being, of the immense spiritual tension; and this urge expresses itself in mythical moods, mysterious cults, and irrational ideas and ideals, however queer and stupid they may be. Romanticism also has its roots in such an urge. It is the sentimental hankering after something that has irrevocably gone, namely, culture. Bitterly as civilized man may feel the inner emptiness and earnestly as he may long to be religious, it is out of his power to be so. All religiousness in the megalopolis rests on self-deception. Romanticism and rationalism, including scepticism and atheism, are inwardly inter-related. A romantic despises the cold, superficial, and methodical spirit of the others, but he himself has enough of it to use the methods of those whom he disdains. Romanticism is not a sign of sound instinct, but rather of a feeble intellect which hates itself. Finally there arises the "second religiousness" which is the *sequel* of a culture and not its prelude. Men dispense with proof and desire to believe and not to dissect. This second religiousness will be dealt with at length in another chapter.

The foregoing are the general characteristics of every civilization and the norms determining its development, but there are as many civilizations as there are cultures,



or as Spengler says, "Each culture naturally has its own kind of civilization, conditioned in every detail by its general world feeling." Thus Judaism is a kind of civilization, conditioned by Israel's world feeling. There had been no Israelitic sculpture or painting to be transformed, during the period of civilization, into mere craft art, nor had there been any Israelitic science to be degenerated into the materialistic systems of sophists or Darwinians. Israel had not produced men of scientific *deeds* and consequently Judaism did not produce men of scientific *work*. As has been expounded in Chapter IV, spiritual Israel was distinguished almost exclusively by its prophetic religion. Israel's great masters (the prophets) were therefore men of *religious* deeds and in its civilization we have to look for men of *religious* work. That the scribes were the most characteristic representatives of this time is self-evident. To paraphrase Spengler, we may say, on the one side (in Israel of pre-exilic times) there is life formed by growth in one uninterrupted evolution (Deborah, Samuel, Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) and on the other (Judaism of post-exilic times) the autumnal, artificial, rootless life fashioned by the intellect (scribes, men of wisdom, apocalyptists, sceptics, and atheists).

Spengler's morphological interpretation of history saves us the trouble of investigating the causes and external influences which brought about the transformation of Israel's prophetic religion into Judaism. This transformation was chiefly the result of natural inner development. In this chapter the *spiritual* development of Israel's civilization will be examined. To the political and economic development of Judaism a special chapter will be devoted.

The roots of Judaism, being Israel's civilization, are

already to be found in the "Deuteronomic Reformation" which took place in the time of Josiah (620 B. C. E.) and which produced a remarkable literature. Equivalent puritanic movements have arisen in every culture, and to Spengler they signify a gradual emancipation of the town from the soul of the countryside.

The beginnings of the struggle between the town and the countryside and the principles of rationalism lie hidden in them. A few generations later, we see rationalism already developed to such an extent that it assumes mastery in the life of a nation, or as Spengler says: "Two centuries after this puritanic movement the mechanistic world outlook reaches its climax."

This characterization of puritanism applies with astounding accuracy to the Deuteronomic Reformation of Josiah's time. Even chronologically, the Deuteronomic movement fits in with Spengler's ideas concerning puritanism. The chief object of Hilkiah, the high priest, and his followers in Jerusalem, was to purify the Jahwistic religion and to centralize it in the Holy City. Deuteronomy is the work of the priests and the rising bourgeois and intelligentsia of Jerusalem. The centralization of religious life in Jerusalem, being directed against the primitive cult of the peasants, naturally aroused the opposition of the countryside. The peasant refused to give up a religious practice which was intimately associated with his everyday life and to submit to regulations emanating from the abstract spirit of the city, which was incomprehensible to him. Thus the struggle between town and countryside began in Israel. How sharp this conflict was is illustrated by the fact that when the puritan party of Jerusalem killed the antagonistic king, Am-

mon, "the people of the land slew all of them that had conspired against King Ammon."

With Deuteronomy, the first "Holy Book" of Israel's religion was given. In it were hidden the roots of the Holy Scriptures of Judaism. The Book began to separate Israel from its God at the expense of direct inspiration. Codes of law, regulations and statutes, which were "*made*" in town to direct and govern Israel's life, gradually increased in importance until they came to be strictly enforced and assumed mastery. So the "Holy Book," the product of the city intelligentsia, began to rule, or as Spengler would say, "The brain rules because the soul abdicates"; and it is remarkable that in just about two hundred years from the Reformation, the mechanization of Israel's religion reached its climax. Ezra with his elaborate legal code appeared in the fifth century.

Ezra's law and the religion of the great prophets bore the same relationship to each other as civilization does to culture. Ezra's theocratic religion was the mummy of Israel's prophetic soul. In Ezra's legal code the ritual formalism that is the mechanization of Israel's religion reached its climax. It strictly regulated the life of the community and of the individual, stress being laid on externals rather than on inward piety. Everything was laid down in fixed forms and quantities (the kind and number of animals to be offered for sacrifice on all public and private occasions; the ritual to be observed; minutest regulations concerning Sabbath observance, festivals, ritual purity, and circumcision). Nothing was left to personal discretion or free play. One recognizes at once that here the cold intellect was at work and not the prime force of prophetic creativeness. Thus the re-

ligious deeds of Deborah and Isaiah gave way to the religious work of the scribes.

In the intervening two hundred years between the Deuteronomic Reformation and Ezra, Israel underwent this process of transformation. The preserved literature gives us an insight into all its phases. It is remarkable that the destruction of the Temple and the Babylonian exile, which took place in the meantime, had but little influence on this spiritual development. In political and economic life, they caused a great disturbance, but spiritually they were almost insignificant, thanks to the early return of the exiles. The bulk of the people, chiefly the "peoples of the land," never went into exile but remained in Judea. Only the wealthy classes and the political and spiritual leaders were banished to Babylon—mainly the advanced city population. Jerusalem was thus deserted and the centre of cultural life destroyed. But in the Babylonian exile, the religious intelligentsia of Jerusalem continued its tradition undisturbed and, returning to Palestine, it brought with it all its spiritual achievements.

It followed as a matter of course that the exiles, on their return home, took special interest in the restoration of city life. Nehemiah used compulsion in order to populate Jerusalem. Every tenth man of the population of Judea had to settle in the capital. It is self-evident that had it not been for these "stubborn, fanatical Jews of Babylon" whom Spengler so deprecates, Israel's life-course would have come to an end. At the best, Israel would have shared the fate of Samaria. Samaria, capital of Israel's northern kingdom, had been destroyed about one hundred and fifty years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, and her governing classes banished to Assyria. At the time of Samaria's destruction, however, Israel had



not yet developed a self-conscious spiritualized city life. Hence the exiles from Samaria had been assimilated much more easily than had their brethren from Jerusalem. The consequence was that the folk of northern Israel, abandoned by their spiritual and political leaders, had intermixed with their neighbors and foreign colonists; and being unable to recover from the shock of 722, the cultural life of Samaria had ceased forever. Spengler's contention, therefore, that the return of the Babylonian exiles had absolutely no historical significance, is not borne out by historical facts. The forty thousand Jews who did return restored the natural development of Israel and thus the part which they played in Jewish history was decisive. Nehemiah's and Ezra's desperate struggle against the religious degeneration of the "people of the land" makes it abundantly clear that without the intelligentsia which returned from Babylon, southern Israel would have shared the fate of her northern sister kingdom, and that there would have been no Judaism and no Christianity—which, as we shall presently see, are merely manifestations of Israel's civilization. That Babylon could not have taken the place of Palestine is demonstrated by the fact that the Babylonian Jews were up to the second century C. E., that is, for about seven hundred years, of no historical significance. We hardly hear about them throughout this long period despite the fact that, according to Spengler, only a very small fraction of the exiles returned to Palestine. What the people of Judea needed was a resolute, spiritual leadership of which it had been deprived, and the forty thousand Jews were sufficient to fill the gap. In Babylon, the national "head," cut off from the body, which remained in Judea, decayed within a few generations, whereas in Judea, reunited with the na-

tional body, its natural function revived and thus rendered possible the transformation of Israel's culture into civilization.

From this controversy, "Babylon versus Palestine," let us revert to our main subject. It has been shown how prophetism gradually became transformed into Law. The Torah of the scribes was, one might say, mechanized prophetism. The religion of the prophets, conceived intuitively and revealed in form and style manifesting a great prime force of prophetic creativeness, became an object of scientific analysis to the scribes, who dissected it and recorded their conclusions in a dry "scientific" style.

Jeremiah, with remarkable insight, drew a sharp distinction between creative prophetism and the Law of the scribes. He chastised them in a Spenglerian vein, saying, "How do ye say, 'We are wise and the law of the Lord is with us.' Lo, certainly in vain hath wrought the vain pen of the scribes. The wise men are ashamed, confused, and taken. Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord and what wisdom is in them . . . there are no grapes on the vine nor figs on the fig tree and the leaf is faded." So, already to Jeremiah, one of the late great masters of Israel's prophetism, the scribes were dried up souls that produced no fruits—faded leaves. . . .

"Nature as understood by Aristotle and Kant, the Sophists and the Darwinians, was dissectible and dissected; the 'Nature' of Homer and of Doric and Gothic man lived, felt, and was unbounded," says Spengler. If we substitute prophetic religion for nature in the definition of Israel's cultural soul, we have an exact description of the difference between Israel's culture and civilization. The religion of Ezra's God is "dissectible and dissected";

the religion of Deborah and Amos "lived, felt, and was unbounded." Thus Ezra was the Aristotle or Kant of Israel and the scribes were her Sophists and Darwinians. And as it happens these three "contemporaries"—Ezra, Aristotle, and Kant—lived at precisely the same morphological period, about eight hundred years after the awakening of their respective cultures.

Prophetism was not, however, transformed into mechanized religion only. The inward unity of the prophetic soul disintegrated at the hand of the city intelligentsia and gave rise to several domains which, as the result of a natural process of differentiation, became independent from and later on even antagonistic to one another. The exhortations of the great prophets concerning Israel's behavior were translated by the intellectual scribes into theocratic ordinances and statutes, calculated to regulate Israel's life strictly. On the other hand, the intuitive visions and eschatologies of the prophets developed into the literary speculations of the apocalyptists. Both the scribes and the apocalyptists were the sophistic epigones of the great prophets. There is therefore a close affinity between the Torah and the apocalyptic literature. The prophet Ezekiel, who lived in the sixth century and who was the most prominent forerunner of Israel's civilization, exhibited the spirit both of the scribes and of the apocalyptists. He not only continued the work of the Deuteronomic reformers and heralded Ezra's advent, but his prolific visions were already of an apocalyptic rather than of a prophetic character. The "scientific spirit" which permeated the constitution of Israel's theocracy drafted by him in minutest detail also determined the character of his apocalyptic productions. His cherubim, possessing not less than four shapes, the divine throne,

chariot, and canopy, the spirit which animates them, the fire—were all fully described in his first vision. In another vision, the temple was revealed to him in such detail as to figures and measurements that one cannot help marveling at the memory of this visionary. In the absence of genuine prophetic inspiration, Ezekiel tried to create the belief that he really had divine visions. But the cold “scientific” exactitude of his descriptions defeats his object; and the same may be said of Ezekiel’s eschatological visions of Israel’s future glory preceded by the destruction of its enemies. No one endowed with any historical sense can fail to see in Ezekiel the decline of prophetism. This decline also manifests itself in Ezekiel’s language. In distinction to the grand poetic style of the great prophets, the style of Ezekiel’s writings was dry and somehow artificial, although at times he still rose to the heights of his predecessors.

All the elements of the later apocalyptic literature, at least in embryo, are already discernible in Ezekiel’s writings. The post-exilic prophets developed this type of literature, but it was only after the second century B. C. E. that the apocalyptic spirit became crystallized into specifically apocalyptic literature. With the prevalence of religious rationalism (Pharisaic dogmatism) and national distress, the apocalyptic spirit grew into what Spengler calls “rationalistic mysticism.” Among the books of the Bible we find only one that is purely apocalyptic, the Book of Daniel. This book, however, was the forerunner of many others like Enoch, Baruch, IV Ezra, and John’s Revelation of the New Testament. We shall presently deal more fully with nationalistic mysticism, but for the present we shall continue our study of Jewish rationalism.



Apart from the law-making and apocalyptic scribes, Judaism produced many other types of scribe, the most prominent of whom was the wise teacher brooding over the problems of life. We have seen that according to Spengler the wise man, the philosopher, is in every civilization the priest of wisdom, and the educated are his followers. Wisdom is detached from metaphysics and free of mysteries. It is a matter of fact philosophy, practical and materialistic. One would expect Judaism, as the civilization of a dynamically religious culture, to be very productive of ethical wisdom. In fact, Judaism distinguished itself therein as much as in the formalistic religion of the scribes. Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and many psalms bear biblical testimony to this fact. The spirit and the ideas expressed in these books were exactly as Spengler would have expected them if he had conceived Israel as an autonomous culture. The authors of Proverbs (some of the proverbs may be very old but there is no doubt that most of them are post-exilic) taught the wisdom of practical life, the middle course, and common-sense. The self-satisfied life of a righteous Philistine was their ideal. They did not appeal to the national conscience as did the prophets, but to the personal interest of the individual reader.

This individualistic tendency is characteristic of every civilization. The organic life of the community of the preceding epoch disintegrates and the nation generally becomes atomized. First of all, *individual* salvation and happiness are sought. In Judaism as the civilization of Israel's prophetic culture, individualism naturally expressed itself in the all-pervading problem of personal divine retribution. Ezekiel, as forerunner of Judaism, was the first to expound the idea of personal retribution. He

was the first to declare that man is not responsible for the deeds of his fathers. Jahweh, God of Israel, gradually became God of the individual Jews. He observed the behavior of every person, rewarded the righteous, and punished the wicked according to his deeds. Proverbs adhered to this dogma and guided the individual Jew to a virtuous life so that he might please God. And what is virtue according to Proverbs? It is practical wisdom, mastery over instincts and passions—an intelligent life.

The problem of individual retribution was also discussed in the two other biblical books of wisdom, Job and Ecclesiastes. In the former, it was treated poetically and in the latter philosophically. The conflict between the dogma of individual retribution and the actual experiences of real life drove many Jews to scepticism and pessimism. It became the most burning problem of Israel's civilization. Malachi, last post-exilic prophet, already had to contend with those who said, "It is vain to serve God and what profit is it that we have kept his charge? Everyone that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord. And he delighteth in them. Where is the God of justice?" The author of Job made this problem the theme of a great poem. The righteous Job is unable to comprehend the reasons for his terrible sufferings and bravely defends his innocence against the dogmatic arguments of his "wise" friends. "How long will you vex my soul and crush me with words?" retorts Job to their learned counsels. "Know now that God hath subverted my cause and hath compassed me with his net. Behold, I cry out 'Violence' but I am not heard. I cry aloud but there is no justice." Job is a masterpiece worthy to rank among the best literary productions of any of the early civilizations. The poet of Job may be regarded as "contemporary" of

Nietzsche. Like Nietzsche, he gave forceful utterance to the rebellious spirit of "the transvaluation of all values" which, as Spengler rightly observes, is the fundamental criterion of every infant civilization. They both heralded the coming of Nihilism. With Job, life was no longer to be accepted as a matter of course and as part of an inscrutable destiny. He revolted against it and made of it a problem. The solution which he offered is vague, unless perhaps it was the scribes who made it appear so. But then Nietzsche's solution, the superman, is also vague—a castle in the air. In both cases there is a great contrast between the daring enunciation of the problems and their solutions, between the iconoclastic attacks on traditional ideas and the conclusions drawn. Eventually Job submitted, with resignation, to the omnipotent and omniscient God, but one feels that his religion was that of a sceptical atheist whose heart was filled with a stirring and wistful desire for real religiousness. This desire, strong and impelling though it may have been, signifies that something had been irrevocably lost. Job's doubts, fears, and sufferings are clear indications that Israel's culture was beginning to tire. His attempt to save the individualized religion of Israel and to overhaul it in the light of reason, did not succeed. Similar attempts to impose thought upon religion have always failed in every civilization. Jahweh was no longer, as in the early and late epochs of Israel's culture, a reflection of life. He was, as in every civilization, thought reflected upon life.

This difference also manifested itself in the literary style of the book Job. One feels that both as regards Job's *language* and style, the instinctive creative forces were on the decline. Job exhibited dramatic energy and vivid fantasy characteristic of the first centuries of every civ-

ilization, but the direct force of expression and the natural pathos of Isaiah's speech were beginning to fade. The "diatribe," the verbose discourse which, according to Spengler, belongs to the religion of the irreligious, was beginning to prevail; and this is also noticeable in the discussions between Job and his friends. Job's discourse on the relationship between man and God approaches the forms of Stoic rhetoric and western journalism.

It is unfortunate that many books written during this period were disqualified from canonization and have thus, with few exceptions, been lost. That Judaism was very productive during that time is proved by the fact that Ecclesiastes, written in the third century B. C. E., already found it necessary to say, "Be admonished, my son, of making many books without end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." All literary works which did not conform to the religious conception of the scribes were rejected, so that we miss in the Bible just those books which would have given us a clearer insight into the spiritual tendencies within Judaism, apart from those approved by official Judaism. Fortunately, despite many doubts and attempts to exclude the book, Ecclesiastes was canonized and has been preserved. And what a pity it would have been if the censorship had been stricter and this book also had been lost. We would then have been deprived of one of the most important and interesting documents, because Ecclesiastes signifies a big stride towards the devitalization of Israel's culture and sheds light on a tendency within Judaism which is exceedingly significant and characteristic of every civilization. Ecclesiastes is an unmistakable symbol of the "extinction" (*Fertigsein*) of a soul fatigued to death. In Ecclesiastes,



the Jewish spiritual nihilism reached its climax. It represents the breaking up of a culture which had actualized all its inner possibilities. Nihilism, agnosticism, scepticism, pessimism, and all the other modern "isms" of Jewish character are expressed in this small book of Ecclesiastes.

"Vanity of vanities; all is vain—what profit hath man of all his labor wherein he laboreth under the sun? One generation passeth away and another generation cometh and the earth abideth for ever." "There is nothing new under the sun." "In much wisdom is much vexation and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." "The wise man, his eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness. However, I also perceive that one event happeneth to them all." "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and make his soul enjoy pleasures for his labor." "All go into one place; all are of the dust and all return to dust, so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast."

These and many other utterances of Ecclesiastes have induced some critics of the Bible to assume a direct influence of Greek philosophy upon the author. That there was some influence is by no means out of the question, but a Spenglerian historian would in any case expect to find a nihilist of Ecclesiastes' style, in Judaism of just *this* period of its development. Without him the picture of Israel's civilization would be incomplete. He is part and parcel of Judaism and is intimately related to Job and other scribes. Morphological examination clearly shows that the ideas of Ecclesiastes are generally *Jewish* in character. Not the God of Nature, but Jahweh the Lord of History is shown in this book as capitulating in consequence of the merciless onslaught of the Jewish city intelligentsia.

"I return and consider all the oppressions that are done under the sun and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter and on the side of their oppressors there was power. Wherefore I praise the dead that are already dead more than the living that are yet alive, but better than they both is he that hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun." "There is a vanity which is done upon the earth that there are righteous men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again there are wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous—I said that this also is vanity. So I commanded mirth that a man had no better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink and to be merry, and that this should accompany him in his labor all the days of his life which God hath given him under the sun."

These quotations conclusively prove that the premises from which Ecclesiastes drew his pessimistic conclusions were purely Jewish. The perversion of social justice and the sufferings of the poor and the righteous on the one hand and the prosperity and well-being of the wicked on the other, drove the wise Ecclesiastes to despair of his wisdom and of the ability of the human intellect to comprehend the principles of Jahweh the Lord of History and Justice. The great prophets, in their unflinching struggle against the religious evils of their people, splendidly conceived the idea of universal ethical monotheism. Ecclesiastes, as one of the symbols of extinct prophetism, was concerned with the sufferings of *individuals* and, in despondent resignation, produced a "diatribe" on the contradictions of social life and the limitations of the human mind. In the agnosticism, scepticism, and pessimism of Ecclesiastes, Israel's world-feeling of this period

adequately expressed itself. The withdrawal of the wise men from the realities of historical life is, as we have seen, one of the characteristic phenomena of every civilization.

This exhaustion of the creative prime forces of Israel was also naturally manifested in the linguistic character of Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes' language and style were mishnaic rather than biblical. The genuine Hebrew syntax was already dried up. Very seldom do we find in this book the imperfect with the *vav* consecutive, which is so characteristic of the biblical style.

To the mechanized religion of scribes and the scholasticism of religious "commonsense" and "middle course" as evolved in "wisdom literature" there belongs, as Spengler would say, of inner necessity that rationalistic mysticism of the educated which may manifest itself in great rationalistic visions and fantastic religious works. This rationalistic mysticism, exactly as Spengler describes it, also flourished in the civilized life of Judaism. It manifested itself in those great rationalistic visions and fantastic religious works of the apocalyptists. The further Judaism and Israel's civilization advanced, the greater became the intellectual tension and the stronger grew the urge for relaxation. The steadily growing mass of apocalyptic literature demonstrates this tendency. The tired, rootless, civilized Jew found in this mystical world another refuge from the world of actualities. It was a flight from the realities of historical life into the sphere of fantastic visions.

Thus we come back to Daniel, the only apocalyptic book of the Old Testament and the first specimen of the rich apocalyptic literature, some books of which have been preserved in the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, and the New Testament. In mystical visions, fantastic

mysteries, and fanciful allegories and parables, these apocalyptic scribes revealed future events in the national and individual life of the Jew, thus offering them consolation and compensation for their present sufferings and discontent. Among the apocalyptists there were also many preachers who wandered about and excited the people with expectations of the imminent advent of the Kingdom of God. The reveling poets and mystics of Alexandria and Rome and the occult, theosophic, and revivalist preachers of the great cities of Western civilization are their "contemporaries."

From a morphological point of view, Daniel and the rest of the apocalyptists were, like Ezra, Job, and Ecclesiastes, a significant expression of Israel's civilization. Only as belonging to the history of Judaism, as Israel's civilization, can they be correctly understood. Without the apocalyptists the picture of the people's civilization would not have been complete. The apocalyptists' religious concepts were a natural outgrowth of Judaism. Their eschatological visions of the Day of Judgment and the Kingdom of God, and their belief in individual survival and resurrection were direct inferences drawn by rationalistic mystics from the Jewish religion. The underlying problem was again the same dogma of divine retribution which vexed the Jewish religious mind during the whole period of Israel's civilization. The Lord of History and the dispenser of justice stood or fell with this dogma. Ecclesiastes was satisfied with the comfortable philosophy of the golden middle course. But many who were unable to reconcile the actual experiences of national and individual life with traditional dogma, became confirmed atheists and turned their backs on the religion



of their forefathers. No religion, however, surrenders so readily. The new belief in individual resurrection, in reward in the hereafter, and in the Kingdom of God, were the logical conclusions arrived at by Jewish revivalists filled with a strong mystical desire to remain religious. Israel, God's chosen people, would be redeemed in glory, and the righteous man would arise from the grave to a life of eternal bliss. Thus was the Jewish religion saved. Some elements of these apocalyptic visions may have been syncretistic, but the principal ideas were purely Jewish, grown on the artificial soil of the rootless city life. That the Sadducees should have been opposed to these ideas was natural because, as will presently be shown, they were the reactionary aristocracy, the conservative money-nobility, and as such they were opposed to the innovations introduced by the city intelligentsia.

One more literary tendency must be mentioned to render the picture of Israel's spiritual civilization complete. It is the romanticism which, as Spengler observes, manifested a sentimental yearning for something which had been irrevocably lost. Jewish literary romanticism produced some beautiful idyllic stories and legends (Ruth and Jonah are biblical books of this type). They were not, however, worthy of ranking with those profound and almost unearthly creations belonging to the early culture. Ruth and the epic of Joseph bear the same relationship to each other as Theocritus and Pindar. In the latter, life revealed itself with an instinctive creative force, whereas in the former it was sought and longed for with the sentimental yearning of an intellectually overstrained romantic. Consequently, this Jewish romanticism was as much a part of Judaism as the mechanized

religion, the wisdom of the prophets, the scepticism and pessimism of Ecclesiastes, the atheism of the "godless," and the rationalistic mysticism of the apocalypticists.

In all these spiritual fields, the productivity of Judaism was very great, but this "mass production" has been characteristic of every civilization. The grand style of Israel's culture was gone and there remained only the possibility of *extension* and *expansion*. More and more the productions became stale repetitions of no significance. There arose no more geniuses. Technical knowledge and workmanlike industry were the foremost requisites for the production of the caustic jurisprudence, the fantastic religious works, and the sentimental novels. With the expansion of public education (compulsory education was introduced about 100 B. C.) the quantitative element became the deciding factor. What was produced during this late period of Judaism was in essence nothing more than an endless re-writing of the works of the past.

The few Jewish books handed down to us apart from the Old Testament, no matter in what language or country they were written, reflect this tendency within Judaism. No new specific types were produced. We find only imitations or magnifications of those types which were represented in the biblical literature. The apocalyptic authors of the books Enoch, Baruch, Sibyls, IV Ezra, and John's Revelation of the New Testament, were of the same spiritual mould as the author of Daniel. There was nothing essentially new in them. They were all typical representatives of Jewish rationalistic mysticism. Jewish romanticism later produced novels such as Tobit and Judith, and many legends to be found in the books of Maccabees, the Epistle of Aristeas, or Jubilees, as well as

many prayers and elegies (the Psalms and Odes of Solomon). But no new elements can be discovered in them. The wise pedagogue of the Proverbs reappeared in Jesus ben Sira and many other teachers. The most prolific were Ezra's many successors—the scribes and the long series of tannaim whose productions are preserved in the Mishnah. That there were throughout the whole of this period also sceptics, pessimists, and confirmed atheists, is proved by the many exhortations to the godless and wicked contained in the literature which has been preserved (e. g., the second chapter of ben Sira).

This prolific productivity at first sight suggests an intensive cultural life, but to quote Spengler once again, we may say, "It was a hurried, shallow activity; quantity replaced quality; spreading replaced deepening." In fact, this productivity of Israel's civilization reminds us most vividly of the literary mass production of the Hellenistic period and that of our own time. Did not Ecclesiastes try to dissuade his people from writing countless books?

Thus, despite the strict censorship of the scribes, it has been possible to trace to Judaism all those traits which Spengler would have expected Israel's civilization to exhibit if he had regarded Israel as an autonomous cultural entity.

## VIII. CHRISTIANITY—ISRAEL'S "SECOND RELIGIOUSNESS"

According to Spengler, every civilization, after having grown and fulfilled itself in the course of a predetermined number of generations—about six hundred years—passes irresistibly to its death. Since Israel's civilization began in the fifth century, we should expect Judaism to have approached its death in the second century C. E. We are not at this juncture concerned with the question of Israel's death, but with a movement which Spengler declares arises in every civilization as soon as all the possibilities of an intellectual understanding of life and the world have been exhausted, that is to say, when the civilization draws to its close. Spengler calls this movement the "second religiousness" and characterizes it (to quote him almost literally) in the following terms:

"The second religiousness is the necessary counterpart of Caesarism, which is the final political constitution of all advanced civilizations. They are both devoid of the creative prime forces of the early culture. The greatness of the second religiousness lies in deep piety, the creations of which, however, lack originality. Nothing new is built up. No new idea unfolds itself. It is as if a mist had arisen from the landscape and out of it the old forms materialized at first dimly and then gradually more clearly. The second religiousness contains the ideas of the first and genuine one, but differently experienced and expressed. At first, rationalism disappears, then there appear the



forms of the early culture, and finally the whole world of the primitive religion, which originally gave way to the great forms of the early culture, is forcibly thrust up in a popular syncretism which is invariably to be found in every civilization. The second religiousness is not the religious pastime of educated men and the satiated literati, but is the simple faith of the folk in some mythical constitution of reality, in relation to which all the casuistic arguments are nothing more than a wearisome game with meaningless words.

"Popular syncretism has always taken its rise from rationalistic teachings and has permeated them with motifs drawn from rural life, early culture, and exotic sources of every conceivable kind. The classical syncretism since 200 B. C. E. drew its motifs from the Orphic, Egypt and Syria. The deification of man combined with a suitable ritual of worship is a common trait of almost all religions of this second degree. With this cult of human divinities (Caesars, philosophers, or founders of religions), the first attempts are made to bring the second religiousness into rigid organizations (sects or churches). Thus begins its transformation into a religion of 'Fellaheen' in which the contrast between megalopolitan and provincial religiousness disappears. The religion becomes completely rigid, timeless, and eventless. In the past, decades had signified an epoch; now centuries have no significance. The ups and downs of superficial changes testify that the inner form is definitely finished. There are always amongst Fellaheen peoples extremely spiritual and absolutely finished men such as the Brahmins of India, the Mandarins of China, and the priests of Egypt who bewildered Herodotus. But the religion of Fellaheen itself is again thoroughly primitive, as the Egyptian cult of animals at the

time of the 26th dynasty and Islam of the Orient of to-day."

In a sketchy outline of Israel's life-course such as is given here, a whole chapter devoted to Christianity might appear disproportionate. Justification is however to be found in the fact that Spengler's misconception of Judaism is partly based on his misinterpretation of early Christianity. As we have seen, Spengler warns us most emphatically not to be misled by surface appearances and not to mistake the second religiousness for a prelude to a culture instead of its equal. He must have felt that the deep piety of the simple folk of civilized nations is very misleading. Unfortunately Spengler himself is guilty of just this mistake. He has misconceived early Christianity as prelude of the Magian culture, whereas all available historical documents indicate most clearly that it was rather one of the manifestations of the Jewish second religiousness, that is, the *sequel* of Israel's culture. It is striking how accurately Spengler's definition is applicable to early Christianity. So much so, in fact, that one is inclined to think that, while defining the second religiousness, Spengler may have had the character and history of early Christianity in mind.

An impartial examination of Spengler's contention that the Jews were, by reason of their Magian character, indifferent to a national home or language, will demonstrate clearly how fallacious is Spengler's conception of Christianity. He attempts to prove that the "religious consensus" is homeless, that to a Magian man the religious community, irrespective of its locality, is his home, and that to him a stranger is one who comes not from a foreign land but from a different religious community. He maintains also that to the Magian man linguistic differences are of no significance and that, so long as one conforms to the

divine commandments, he is a co-patriot, no matter what language he speaks or from what country he comes. Whatever the case may be with regard to other peoples who are considered by Spengler as belonging to the Magian culture, it is certain that to Israel the above characterization of Magian peoples does not apply. Spengler's ideas concerning Judaism are based chiefly on the assumption that the apocalyptic spirit was one of the manifestations of the Magian culture at the time of its awakening; and from the fact that early Christianity was indifferent to geographical homes and national languages he draws the natural conclusion that this indifference must have been inherent in the specific nature of the culture of which Christianity was one manifestation.

Now, it is true that Christianity (particularly that of Paul) disregarded geographical and linguistic boundaries and was preached in many languages and lands, but the reason for this had absolutely nothing to do with the cultural peculiarities of Judaism.

Let us first of all consider the *linguistic* indifference of the Jews at the time of early Christianity. We already know that at that time the formative forces of Israel had already become extinct. This extinction of creative forces had also manifested itself in the Hebrew language. The grand style of the great masters was gone. Transplanted to the artificial soil of city life, the Hebrew of the past had been transformed into the "scientific," rootless scriptural language of the scribes. To a great extent it had lost its symbolical significance.

The change-over from Hebrew to Aramaic and Greek which took place during the time of Israel's civilization, concurrently with the devitalization of Hebrew, is very significant. In pre-exilic Israel, the people spoke Hebrew

exclusively. The Aramaic language was used only in the international relations of diplomats and merchants. When in the sixth century the political and economic structure of Israel was destroyed, the backward people of the land, whose national consciousness had not yet been developed, remained in Judea and assimilated easily with their neighbors who spoke Aramaic. This assimilation resulted among other things in the creation of a kind of Yiddish—a jargon, half Hebrew and half Aramaic. Nehemiah was horrified at the mixture of languages which he found in Judea. Only the nationally self-conscious intelligentsia adhered to the language of their forefathers and continued to “develop” it. The modern nationalist slogan, “Speak your national language!” was also heard in Judea of that time, but all the propagandist efforts produced no lasting result. The people continued to speak the Aramaic jargon. This fact, however, had practically no influence on the development of Hebrew. The inward development of the national language had already been completed. The Hebrew of the prophets could not have been surpassed. And, in the epoch of civilization it is not the language of the common people that matters but the literary language of scientists, artists, and philosophers. Since Jewish scientists and philosophers (the scribes of all types) continued to write Hebrew, the development of Israel’s language ran exactly parallel with that of any other nation.

Spengler characterizes the language of completely civilized nations in the following words, “In the upper stratum of megalopolis, there arises a uniform, intelligent, practical language adverse to dialect and poetry—the *koine*. It is something mechanical, precise, cold. *Economics* created it and not the spirit of religion or race. Being



artificial and rootless, it can be easily translated or acquired."

In fact, the languages of Deborah or Isaiah, of Homer or Sophocles, of Eddas or Shakespeare are unique and cannot be translated or acquired. Like all other creations of culture they are inimitable expressions of an organic life. The language of the scribes, on the other hand, like those of Hellenistic or modern European writers, is as translatable and transferable as most of the other productions of civilization. Creations of pure intellect are homeless, that is, cosmopolitan.

It is therefore natural that, as Israel's civilization advanced, Hebrew lost its symbolic character and became a matter of choice rather than of inherent necessity. It would not have mattered much, as an instance, if Ecclesiastes had been written in Greek or any other language. We cannot, however, imagine Deborah or Isaiah speaking any other language than Hebrew. We do not know how it came about that Daniel was written in both languages, Hebrew and Aramaic, but this fact is of no importance. The character of the book does not suffer from it. It could just as well have also been written in Greek. Similarly, the scientific works of the Hellenists and of contemporary modern scientists do not change their character by being translated into foreign languages. All the languages of advanced civilizations are in fact cosmopolitan. Practical, economic reasons determine which of them should actually become the international language. If Judaism had been politically and economically strong, it might have imposed its language on other nations. In the circumstances, however, it was only natural that the Jews should have adopted the accepted international languages, Greek

and Aramaic. Greek was adopted by the educated and by all those who lived in a Greek environment, whereas Aramaic was adopted by the common people and by those who lived in an Aramean environment. All popular works were written in Aramaic, which was transformed, by the spirit of the second religiousness of the naive folk, into a kind of dialect comparable to the Yiddish of today. The intelligentsia, the merchants, and the ruling classes, however, used more and more Greek at the expense of Hebrew, so that ultimately Hebrew became confined to sacred books and thus became the "holy tongue." This linguistic development of Judaism was a most natural evolution and is in complete accord with Spengler's historical morphology. Consequently we arrive at the conclusion that Judaism in the time of Christianity was indifferent in respect of language, not because of its cultural peculiarities but because it had reached a stage when the national language loses its symbolical significance and, as in the case of all other advanced civilizations, becomes a matter of choice rather than of inner necessity.

Now we come to the question of land, the geographical home. We have established that what Spengler regards as the first cultural stage of one of the Magian nations was in fact the late stage of Israel's civilization, exhibiting all the manifestations considered by him to be characteristic of every advanced civilization. It is almost incredible that Spengler should have regarded the apocalyptic literature, the self-evident manifestation of rationalistic mysticism within Judaism, as equivalent of the popular epics of Homer and the Eddas. Are not rather Deborah and the authors of the biblical epics the "contemporaries" of Homer and the bards? It is obvious that Spengler has misread the symbolic phenomena of Israel's culture and civ-

ilization. Otherwise he could not possibly have regarded the highest and purest expression of Israel's prophetism, which has never been surpassed, as only the first dim stirrings of a culture which had not yet even awakened. In what cultural history do we find, seven or eight hundred years prior to the cultural awakening, geniuses like Amos or Isaiah? It is like looking for a Sophocles among the Greeks of 1800 B. C. E. or a Shakespeare among the English of 200 C. E. In those "dark" days, the forefathers of Sophocles and Shakespeare respectively lived a primitive, nomadic life, comparable to that which, according to our outline of Israel's life-course, Amos' ancestors lived about 1900 B. C. E. This, in the light of Spengler's morphology of history, is the indisputable historical truth and it explains why spiritual Judaism, in the time of early Christianity, was indifferent to the geographic, national home.

If we assumed that the classical culture had awakened in the second century C. E. instead of in the eleventh B. C. E., and that Western culture would awaken about seven generations hence instead of having awakened in the tenth century C. E., we would attribute also to the peoples of the classical and Western cultures, indifference to fatherland as one of the traits of their innate character. And this is exactly what Spengler has done in regard to Israel's culture. At the time of the second religiousness of Israel, which Spengler regards as one of the first expressions of Magian culture at the time of its awakening, Judaism was culturally at the same stage as the classical was in the second century C. E.; and the Western will come, according to Spengler, some generations hence. At this late period of civilization, there was no longer an inward attachment to the soil; the people were intellectual nomads—rootless and homeless cosmopolitans. Spengler says: "The

civilized man, the intellectual nomad was totally homeless—spiritually free as the hunter and shepherd were sensually. ‘Ubi bene ibi patria’—this applies to what preceded a culture as well as to what succeeded it.” The civilized Jews of Jesus’ time were as detached from the soil as the Hellenists who were their “contemporaries” or the advanced Europeans and Americans of today. The attachment to the fatherland may still have been strong even during this period, as the fanatic Jewish wars against Rome testified, but such attachment is a political manifestation of the popular second religiousness. To the civilized cosmopolitan, land as well as language is a matter of choice rather than of inherent necessity.

In conclusion, we may say that Israel’s inward attachment to soil as well as to language had been at the time of Deborah and Isaiah of just such symbolic significance as that of the peoples of other cultures, but that it was no longer so at the time of early Christianity, any more than it has ever been among peoples of late civilizations.

Having disposed of the question of language and homeland, we may now proceed to deal with the spiritual aspects of Israel’s second religiousness.

One is accustomed to think of Christianity in contrast to Judaism as if they were distinguished by an inherent difference in world feeling and outlook on life. Judaism and Christianity are contraposed as if they were manifestations of two conflicting cultural entities. Spengler did not quite free himself from this popular belief and hence arise most of his inconsistencies.

In the preceding exposition of Judaism, it has already been made clear that Christianity and Judaism bore the same relationship to each other as the Hellenistic popular syncretism bore to Hellenism. There can be no question



of contrast or conflict between them because the latter was an outcrop of the former. Moreover, the early Christianity of Judea did not comprise the whole of the Jewish second religiousness. It was merely one of its manifestations. Jesus of Nazareth had many predecessors, contemporaries, and successors, who morphologically did not differ from him at all. During the advanced period of Israel's civilization there were many prophets of popular syncretism who preached repentance as a preparation for the Kingdom of Heaven. They belonged to those naive mystics who have always appeared at this stage of civilization and, as a reaction to the overstrained intellectual life of the cities, have given expression to the hunger of the simple folk for a faith in some mythical constitution of life and the world. That Jesus eventually became more famous than any of the others was due to the mentality and energy of Paul rather than to Jesus himself. During his lifetime, Jesus was almost indistinguishable from many other preachers of the second religiousness. It is remarkable that, apart from what is set down in the New Testament, we know practically nothing about him. Yet there is no reason to doubt the historicity of most of what his disciples preached in his name. The spirit embodied in the Gospels and in the simple life story of Jesus is in full accord with what we would expect it to be if regarded as a manifestation of Israel's second religiousness. If the Gospels had been lost and we were called upon to reconstruct the personality of Jesus as one of the preachers of Israel's second religiousness, we could rewrite their most characteristic portions without knowing them.

The greatness of early Christianity lay in the deep piety of the simple folk of Galilee. It unfolded no new ideas, and the forces underlying it were of a secondary order. Nei-

ther in style, language, ideals, nor in religious conceptions was there any element of originality. It comprised the accumulated contents of Israel's cultural past, but differently experienced and expressed. Jesus' God was still the Lord of History and the Supreme Judge of Israel and of mankind, but Jesus experienced Judaism in a manner similar to that in which an old man in his second childhood experiences the ideals of his past. He no longer had sound instinct or historical tact; his attitude to the realities of life was sentimental and unworldly. "My Kingdom is not of this world," was his saying. To suppress human passions, to kill all racial instincts (of sexual and parental love, of revenge, of avarice), to practice pity and selfless love even towards enemies, and to repent because the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand—all these exhortations were Israelitic in character, breathing the devout spirit of Israel's second religiousness. Deborah's henotheistic Jahweh, reflecting the pugnacious character of His youthful people, was remorselessly cruel against Israel's enemy; the monotheistic God of Justice of Amos and Isaiah was a severe and strict judge of Israel's and mankind's religious, social, and political conduct; Ezra's God watched and rigidly enforced the observance of His precepts, as embodied in the Holy Book; Job's God was detached from human affairs; and Ecclesiastes dissected Him and made Him inaccessible to the human mind. Then came the God of the second religiousness as the loving Father, sentimental and mysterious.

In the Jewish second religiousness, the devout piety of the simple folk revolted against the mechanized religion of the scribes and against the rationalism of the city intelligentsia. The casuistic arguments of the teachers of religious colleges were meaningless and incomprehensible to

the "people of the land." The peasants, the fishermen, and the artisans of the countryside disliked the self-opinionated doctrinaire teacher. They yearned for a saviour who would satisfy their inward piety and hunger for metaphysics rather than fix their behavior according to the law of the Book. Israel's second religiousness produced many such prophets and saviours. Flavius Josephus complained that "the country was infested with robbers and impostors (all revolutionaries appeared as such in the eyes of the complacent bourgeoisie) who deluded the credulous multitude." A day scarcely passed in which Felix did not bring some of them to condign punishment (*Antiquities* Book XX. Chap. VI). Jesus was one of them and by no means the most important. Judah of Galilee, whose rebellion was quenched in blood, and John the Baptist, who was put to death by the king, seem to have made a deeper impression on their contemporaries than Jesus. The people of Galilee, living far from the seats of learning, were especially susceptible to religious ecstasies and frenzies. The teachings of the saviours were not all identical in substance but they breathed the same spirit. Some laid stress on nationalistic, others on individualistic elements. To some the Messiah was chiefly the redeemer of oppressed Israel, to others—the saviour of the distressed human soul. By origin and tendency, however, all these Messiahs belonged equally to Israel's second religiousness. All of them offered a solution of devout piety to the conflict between the dogma of retribution—individual or national—and the actual experiences of life. The simple folk thirstily drank the words of the preachers who proclaimed the imminent advent of the Day of Judgment and the Kingdom of Heaven and found in them, as well as in the ideas of survival and resurrection, compensation for the bitter expe-

riences of this world. The preachers of the second religiousness did not reject the teachings of the rationalistic religion of the scribes or the fantastic speculations of the apocalyptists, but permeated them with motifs drawn "from rural life, early culture, and exotic sources of every conceivable kind." Jesus himself was an observant Jew who proclaimed that He did not come to change a jot or tittle of the Holy Scriptures. In contrast to the strictness of the casuistic interpretation of the Pharisees, he only infused the law with the piety of the simple folk and permeated it with motifs drawn from Amos and Isaiah and from some exotic sources—especially Syrian and Greek—through the medium of the apocalyptic literature. This popular syncretism of the simple folk and the rationalistic syncretism of the sated intelligentsia expressed in the apocalyptic literature gradually became identical in tendency. It was increasingly difficult to draw a line of differentiation between these two types of religious syncretism. The Essenes, who were chiefly ascetics of the type of the weary intelligentsia, soon became completely absorbed by the popular syncretism of the second religiousness. Among the Christian Jews of Judea there were even many Pharisees.

Spengler points out that the deification of man is a common trait of almost all religions of this second grade. Something very akin also occurred within the second religiousness of Israel. The monotheistic tendency of Israel's religion, which is one of its fundamental traits, was averse to the deification of the Son of Man. Instead, Israel produced a Messiah bestowed by God with superhuman powers, who would deliver Israel or descend from Heaven and establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. To the Jewish Christians, Jesus was a Messiah only; the



Hellenistic Christians made of him a god. King David, Elijah, and many other heroes of the past became, in the popular imagination of that time, messianic heralds of God—pre-existent, superhuman, and divine personalities. This was the Jewish equivalent of similar tendencies among other movements of second religiousness. In the eschatology of the great prophets the Messiah was the hoped for political king of Israel who would restore the glory of David's dynasty and establish a real kingdom based on justice and peace. In the second religiousness these messianic hopes were relived but in a different spirit. The political and dynastic elements of the original Messiah were replaced by the mystic elements of the popular syncretism. The Messiah was no longer a man of flesh and blood to come forth out of the house of David, but a superhuman, mythical being to appear on a predetermined day and hour; he would establish not a Jewish state but the Kingdom of Heaven. The people were tired of life on earth, so they hoped for ethereal life in the divine realm.

These are the fundamental characteristics of Israel's second religiousness. It would carry us too far if we attempted to trace its development and the various forms of its manifestation. The confusion and the spiritual chaos characteristic of all late civilizations were reflected also in the conflicting currents and under-currents of the popular syncretism. It suffices to recall the confusing diversity of gods during the time of Hellenistic syncretism to illustrate the diverse manifestations of Israel's second religiousness. It was a fatigued world, a world that had no future before it. And in the last hours it clutched thirstily at every cup of faith in the hope that this might contain some medium of rejuvenation. As an old man approach-

ing the end of life usually becomes superstitious and is ready to believe anybody and anything, so did the peoples of late civilizations clutch at any god, fantastic and absurd though he might be. The Jews in the time of Jesus lived under similar conditions. They lost their sense of proportion and clung with the tenacity of despair to any hope or promise held out to them. The fanatical party strife of the zealots fighting senselessly behind the walls of Jerusalem when besieged by the Roman legions illustrated most vividly the spirit that obsessed Israel in the last stages of its life course. This superstitious and unreal, yet deep and unshakable, faith in mysterious powers, together with this desperate self-abnegation and mystic fanaticism, characterizes all genuine movements of the second religiousness. But no such movement has a long life; it flares up for a while and then dies out.

Sharing the fate of other nations' similar activities, revolutionary religious movements of Israel's second religiousness soon died out. They were brought into rigid organizations in which devout piety, superstitious syncretism, and deep faith in future salvation survived and permeated the entire religious world of Israel. The difference between megalopolitan and provincial religiousness became gradually almost indistinguishable. Thenceforward Israel's religion was timeless. Centuries passed without historical significance, whereas formerly even decades had been of great symbolic meaning. The people submitted themselves to the decrees of the rabbis, the contemporary equivalents of the Brahmins of India or the Mandarins of China.

Was the later history of Israel, after completion of its life course, really as eventless as Spengler's conception of history would have it? With this question I shall deal

later on. Before concluding I have still to consider the contributions of Paul and the role played by him in the development of Christianity, because to a certain extent these still appertain to the history of Judaism.

All productions of megalopolis are, by reason of their rootlessness, transferable. Not only the achievements of science and technique, but also philosophical systems and metaphysical speculation, are exportable. They may be adopted and applied by any alien people, especially when the latter has grown out of the cultural stage and become a civilized nation. The expansion of Hellenism and of contemporary European civilization testifies to this fact. No wonder, therefore, that as a result of mutual contact Judaism and Hellenism now became intimately inter-related. The more they aged, the more accessible did they become to each other. In the cultural stage, Israel and Greek culture were worlds utterly apart. The gulf between the prophetic and the Appolonian world-outlook was impassable, but as they advanced in civilization they grew nearer and nearer to each other. The intellect, as soon as it becomes pure and free, admits of no frontiers. Its products may spread everywhere. They are transferable and interchangeable.

We have seen that the actual difference in age between Israel's and the Appolonian cultures was almost negligible. Their life courses were contemporary not only in the morphological, but also in the ordinary chronological sense. Therefore, when they reached the stage of late civilization, the mentalities of the Jewish and of the Hellenistic tired intelligentsia were virtually identical. They manifested contemporaneously an urge for metaphysics and a tendency toward syncretism.

The medley of religions, as well as the confusing di-

versity of philosophical systems of political or economic programs, recurs significantly in all late civilizations. We know also that the tired intelligentsia of all the great cities—Alexandria and Jerusalem as well as London and New York—showed a predilection for exotic religions. It is no wonder, then, that the exotic cults adopted by the Hellenistic world included the cult of Jesus. Judaism had attracted attention and made converts long before Jesus' time, and this was due rather to the frantic search of the fatigued Hellenists for a mystical religion than to the missionary zeal of the Jews. But as Judaism attracted Hellenism, so did Hellenism attract Judaism. The two civilizations exchanged ideals and systems, so that in the great cities the difference between the Hellenist and the Jew gradually disappeared. It is difficult to ascertain how much of Hellenism and how much of Judaism Philo's philosophy contains. It is futile to speculate on whether he Judaized Plato or Platonized Judaism. The cosmopolitan Philo was capable of allegorizing away anything in order to make his ideas accessible and intelligible to the cosmopolitan intelligentsia of Alexandria. His adherence to the traditional law was of no deep significance. His religion was irreligious. That this was so is proved by the fact that the Alexandrian Jews, and more especially Philo's followers, were rapidly assimilated by and absorbed into the Hellenistic world. Philo's philosophy was also one of the most important of the sources from which the cosmopolitan Christianity of the West drew its theological concepts and methods.

It was, however, Paul's achievement that Christianity became a world religion. Paul and Jesus were related to each other as were rationalistic mysticism and the second religiousness. Jesus' followers were fishermen, peasants,



and artisans—the naive folk of Galilee and Judea; Paul made his appeal to the rootless population of the great cities, regardless of nationality. Jesus spoke in the popular idiom of Jewish Aramaic, Paul made propaganda in Greek. Jesus was a practising Jew and warned against transgressing the Law of Moses; Paul preached that Jesus had abolished that Law. This difference between Jesus and Paul covers the whole difference between the syncretism of the second religiousness and that of the megalopolis. These two kinds of religious syncretism had many points in common and eventually dissolved into each other, but originally there was a wide discrepancy between them.

Paul was a disciple of the greatest intellectual teachers of Judaism (*tannaim*) of his time, and in his youth distinguished himself by his zeal for the Law. As a Jewish rationalist, subtle in interpretation of the Scriptures, he was strongly opposed to the preachers of the second religiousness. It was during his journey to Damascus, whither he had been sent to harry the followers of Jesus, that Jesus appeared to him in a vision with the appeal, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

There is no reason to doubt that the occasion of this overthrow of Paul's past convictions took the form of a vision. Such a psychic experience, as Spengler rightly points out, is common among the intellectually overstrained megalopolitans. It is one of the manifestations of rationalistic mysticism and belongs to the same category as Daniel's visions. Consequently Paul's Christianity was based on a misunderstanding of Jesus, a misunderstanding arising from the spiritual contrast between Jerusalem and Galilee—the megalopolis and the province. Paul could have understood Jesus as much as a citizen of Megalopolis

can understand a peasant or fisherman. Similarly, Jesus would not have understood Paul either. Peter, first apostle of Jesus and all the pious Christian Jews of the genuine second religiousness, were in fact strongly opposed to Paul and his activities, and eventually they dissociated themselves from his Christianity. The intellectual Paul, bent on making a success of his mission, was ready to grant any concessions and compromises that would help to overcome the obstacles which he encountered on his propaganda tour throughout the megalopolitan world. His subtle brain, trained in the Jewish college, was capable of rationalizing everything that he desired to rationalize.

It is of no direct interest to us to follow up the fate of Paul's Christianity in the Hellenistic world. Paul was one of the instruments whereby some of Judaism's elements were conveyed to the outside world. What the Hellenistic syncretism made of them is a question to be answered by investigation into Hellenism rather than into Judaism. The final victory of Paul's Christianity over the Hellenistic Gnosis and the many exotic cults—those of Mithras, Attis, Isis, and the rest—was most probably due to the fact that Jesus' cult contained elements of Israel's prophetism, and for this reason appealed more than any other cult to the downtrodden masses of the cosmopolitan cities.

Finally, the fact that Christianity soon passed into rigid organization—the Church—is covered by our theory, whereas with Spengler's conception it is entirely inconsistent. Spengler himself admits that world history contains no fact analogous to this. The rapid transformation of the second religiousness was the inevitable fate of all syncretistic religions of late civilization. Thus, Spengler's

difficulty in explaining the fact that within but one generation Jesus' religion was transformed into a rigid church would have never arisen if he had formed a right conception of the history of Judaism. Religions of early cultures did not petrify so quickly, whereas syncretistic religions as a rule did.

Naturally, as already mentioned, this was the fate that had also befallen the syncretistic religion within Judaism. The Jewish community of Jesus' followers (Ebionites) soon passed into one of those religious sects which later, after the destruction of the Second Temple, were absorbed by the Jewish Church—the Synagogue. The spirit of second religiousness permeated the whole of Judaism, so that gradually the difference between megapolitan and provincial religiousness became insignificant. The ideas of rationalistic mysticism, no less than those of the popular syncretism, were embodied in the official Judaism of the Synagogue. The legendary portions of talmudical literature breathe the spirit of syncretistic religiousness. The pious messianic faith, the belief in the Kingdom of Heaven, the popular idea of survival and resurrection, and so forth, lived on in the Synagogue. Also, the elements of rationalistic mysticism (Memra Logos; mysteries of cosmogony; theosophic speculations; allegorical interpretations of history) were incorporated in the Judaism of the Synagogue. Judaism was thus transformed into what Spengler would call a religion of Fellaheen.

Spengler contends that religions and people of Fellaheen are without history; that the ups and downs of superficial change within them testify only that the inner form is definitely finished. I shall prove by the history of the Jewish people of Fellaheen that this theory also

requires certain modification; but first let us demonstrate that the political and economic development of Israel in its epoch of civilization was consistent with the morphological conception of Judaism as presented here.

According to Spengler, the second religiousness was the necessary counterpart to Caesarism, which was the final political constitution of late civilization. Does this apply also to Judaism? We shall see that the Caesarian tendency too was strongly manifested in Judaism, and that just at the period when the second religiousness flourished.



## IX. THE JEWISH MODERN STATE

Spengler divides the political and economic development of all civilizations into the following three periods, each lasting for about two centuries: (1) "Democracy"—domination of money; permeation of political forms and institutions by economic forces. (2) "Formation of Caesarism"—victory of force politics over money; increasing primitiveness of political forms; inward decline of nations into a formless populace, and constitution thereof as an Imperium of gradually increasing crudity of despotism. (3) "Maturing of the Final Forms"—private and family politics of individual leaders; enfeeblement and fragility of the imperial machinery to a point where it cannot resist the onslaught of alien conquerors or young peoples eager for spoil.

How was the political and economic structure of civilized nations formed?

The feudal system belonged to the townless countryside. With the rise of city life, money and intelligence—the Third Estate—challenged the authority of the gentry and priesthood—the two primitive estates. A life-and-death struggle ensued between blood and money, tradition and critical spirit. The peasant wars which recurred at the beginning of all late cultures were the first manifestations of soil peasantry rebelling against money that stretched forth its rapacious hand toward the countryside. The megalopolitan social forces, united in a political "liberal" party of democrats, fought the forces of the

past anchored in soil and blood. At first the sovereign ruler supported democracy, as he too strove to break the rivalry of the gentry. But when the Third Estate attained to supremacy and undermined authority not justified by reason, the royal forces, turning against their old supporters, allied themselves with the surviving primitive estate. When civilization set in, the absolute rule of money power became established, concurrently with the victory of the megalopolitan democracy.

The Reformation heralded the rise and ascendancy of the abstract intelligence of the city and of its co-relative abstract, money power of the burghers. The Deuteronomic Reformation of Israel had an analogous economic and political significance. In the first half of the seventh century B. C. E., at a time exactly corresponding to the period of reformation of any other culture, Israel's city population began to assert itself and to struggle for power. As elsewhere, Israel's reformation was accompanied by peasant wars and signified a new and decisive turn in its social life. Deuteronomy inaugurated a period of constitutional struggles. It gave powerful expression to the aspirations of the rising population of Jerusalem for emancipation from the dominance of the primitive estates—the nobility and the priesthood of the countryside. The concepts of national sovereignty and of a centralized state standing above the privileged estates were formed. Abstract ideas of humanity and justice contained in the Deuteronomic constitution, and originating in the brains of the city intelligentsia, for the first time entered the sphere of practical politics. It was the first attempt of inorganic force to organize organically stratified society by the enactment of an abstract constitution. Aiming at the formation of a centralized state,

ruled from the capital and directed against the old nobility that strove to retain its exclusive political power, this constitution naturally was supported by the king Josiah, notwithstanding the opposition of the peasants and the provincial priests.

Conditioned by the cultural character of Israel, the Deuteronomic Reformation assumed more than in any counterpart a purely religious form. It is, however, not difficult to discern its social character. Deuteronomy's humanitarian and liberal ideals, characteristic of all young bourgeois, were proclaimed in the name of Jahweh, the Lord of Israel.

Following the Deuteronomic Reformation, Israel's feudal system began to give place to an absolute State embodying the new abstract ideas of Nation. This bourgeois concept of Nation was here directed, as elsewhere, against the hereditary privileges of the primitive estates and designed to undermine them. The process of political and economic transformation, as it was commenced in Israel with the Deuteronomic Reformation, was completely in accord with Spengler's general conception. Unfortunately, however, Israel's political and economic structure was destroyed only a few decades after the Reformation had set in and the city population risen to national self-consciousness, so that her normal development suffered an interruption.

The populace left in Judea by Nebuchadnezzar consisted of politically and economically, as well as spiritually, backward elements, while the progressive forces of the advanced city life were transplanted to Babylon. Consequently there occurred an inevitable relapse in Israel's development. The rural population and the petty artisans, released from the economic pressure of the ris-

ing bourgeois and freed from the influence of the political nationalism of the revolutionary city intelligentsia, lived an undisturbed, primitive economic and political life. The common people, unhampered by abstract ideas of national superiority and race purity generated by the bourgeois, held intercourse with neighboring peoples, intermarrying with them, adopting their customs, and even ultimately forgetting their own language.

Immediately on the return of the exiles the conflict between the city and the countryside broke out again, and a bitter struggle ensued. The city was represented almost exclusively by the intelligentsia, for the wealthy bourgeois found it more profitable to remain in Babylon. Instead of returning in person, these indulged nationalistic and religious sentiments by lending their support from a distance to the aspirations of the patriotic ideologues.

This significant fact explains why the economic development of Israel in its epoch of civilization failed to conform to Spengler's theory and was, indeed, somewhat different from that of other civilizations. Moreover, this difference was intensified by the circumstance that Judea remained for a long time a dependency of foreign powers, whereby its natural political tendencies were thwarted and repressed.

The exiles at first continued to cherish dynastic hopes. At their head stood a descendant of the blood royal, but gradually this dynastic element was relegated into the background and the purely *spiritual* ideas of a national life came to the fore instead. To the Jewish intelligentsia that returned home, books and theories were of greater importance than institutions anchored in tradition. That not breeding, but education, should determine the qualifi-



cation for leadership, was the attitude of the scribes. The preconceived constitution propagated by them implied that the religious, political, and economic forces of the community should be imposed upon it from without instead of growing organically from within. This tendency, originating in the Deuteronomic Reformation, culminated in Ezra's Law, which was a deliberately compiled constitution based on abstract ideological concepts. The notions of Israel's "chosenness," of purity of race, of the sanctity of national language and soil, of social justice, and so forth, were utilized as popular watchwords in creating public opinion favorable to the constitution. The constitution itself was at first understood only by a select circle of religious intellectuals, but no system or program, whatever its character, has ever exercised a decisive influence on factual life except through the medium of watchwords popularized by men of action to promote the interests of a certain class. Rousseau's *Contrat Social* and Marx's *Das Kapital* shared the same fate.

According to Spengler, the initial period of all civilizations produces constitutional monarchy, with an inherent tendency towards the republic. In Israel the equivalent form of government was the constitutional theocracy. Had not external forces violently disturbed the normal development of Israel, it is very probable that the tendency towards constitutional monarchy so conspicuously manifested in pre-exilic times (Josiah) would have ripened, and a constitutional monarchy have been firmly established in Israel also. We have seen that even after the return from the Babylonian exile an attempt was made to restore monarchy. The descendant of David's dynasty—Sheshbazar—stood at the head of the exiles, and before the high priest became finally endowed

with absolute power we find another offspring of the royal family (Zerubabel) sharing sovereign rule over the community.

The external forces which diverted the course of Israel's civilization from its normal channel were, as mentioned, political as well as economic. As a dependency of Persia, Judea was impeded in its political development, and the dynastic element, formerly so strong in Israel, was thwarted. It found expression later on in connection with the Hasmonean dynasty and in the apocalyptic dreams of Israel's future, but in the first period of civilization, which according to Spengler lasts for about two centuries, there was no scope of Israel's dynastic element to express itself adequately.

The character of all democratic constitutions is as a rule determined chiefly by economic factors. Money and spirit are inwardly inter-related. Both arise out of the formless megalopolitan life. They are twin tendencies of identical origin. Together with the abstract concepts of Truth and Justice appears the Money concept, equally abstract and detached from racial values. And in the first period of civilization Money and Spirit both assume mastery in the guise of Democracy.

Now, Money in the character of a political power was, as already explained, non-existent during this period of Israel's civilization. It was not Money, therefore, but *Spirit* that determined the character of the *Jewish* democracy. In the absence of an influential class of merchants and financiers, the scribe was almost the sole power behind the democratic theocracy. In Nehemiah we may see a representative of the Jewish moneyed bourgeoisie supporting the ideas of intellectual scribes, but the power of which Nehemiah was the representative was in Baby-

lon. Consequently, that power could not have been vitally interested in the constitutional struggles of Judea. In the case of other civilized nations, the Money Power supports the ideas of the intellectuals only so long as the issue of the struggle against the common enemy (the gentry and priesthood) is in the balance. But no sooner are the forces of the past defeated than the Money Power becomes the absolute ruler, keeping the Spirit in subjection also. The Jewish nation in the first period of its civilization had no such rivals, and therefore the Spirit asserted itself more easily than elsewhere. The only rivals of the scribes were the soil peasantry and the priests of the higher ranks. The former had always cherished misgivings against the spiritualized life within the walls of the megalopolis, whereas the latter saw in the intelligentsia a force undermining and restricting their hereditary privileges sanctioned by tradition.

The conflict between the intellectual scribes and the aristocratic priests threw into relief the political incompetence of the intellectual and gave rise to a comic situation. The doctrinaire scribe, instead of himself seizing the supreme power of the country, vested the high priest with sovereign authority. In his political blindness, however, he did not foresee the inevitable consequences of a constitution the executive power of which was entrusted to the hands of its opponents. Ezra was a typical idealogue, and characteristically would not budge from a program which he believed to be inviolable. The absurd political inconsistency which had arisen was demonstrated at his very first attempt to enact his constitution. Eliashib, the legitimate high priest, resenting the innovations of the educated element, rejected Ezra's reforms. It was against the very person whom the new constitu-

tion endowed with supreme authority that Ezra had been waging his battle, and now the high priest who rejected the constitution was expected to respect it and see that it be enforced. We have in recent years witnessed similar situations arise out of the social struggles of Western peoples. If Ezra had been politically consistent and a man of action, he would at once have abolished the office of high priest and transferred the legislative and judicial authority to the scribes, but to an idealistic intellectual an abstract system stands above all political considerations. In later Jewish history, the rivalry between the Temple and the College, between high priest and scribe or rabbi, caused almost incessant friction and bloody conflict, until the centre of spiritual life was shifted from the temple to the religious college; and eventually the latter altogether replaced the former.

In the meantime, with the aid of Nehemiah, man of action, Ezra's constitution was enforced. The opposition was temporarily crushed and the democratic theocracy established. The progressive element, represented in the Judaism of this period by the scribes, won the battle against the forces of the past. It is undoubtedly true that democracy usually means a barely disguised rule of the merchant and the financier; that behind the imposing façade of the democratic state the real forces—property and money—work undisturbed for their own interest, and that the idealistic paper constitution, being a meaningless abstraction, never reveals the actual structure of the state. But in Israel the discrepancy between the ideals of the intellectuals, as embodied in the constitution, and the real forces operating in the Jewish community, was negligible. Nobility and Money Power were virtually non-existent, and therefore there was almost no inter-



ference by these forces with the aspirations of the idealistic democrats.

In the course of time, however, a propertied class and a money-aristocracy developed also in Judea, and they began to struggle for political power. Thus, the permeation of political forms and institutions by economic forces, and the domination of Money Power, came about in Judea later than would appear according to Spengler's scheme. It happened in the second (the Greek) period of Jewish civilization, not in the first, or Persian.

The ascendancy of the capitalist class (merchants, tax-farmers, usurers, big land-owners), and its rapacious struggle for political power, were demonstrated for the first time towards the close of the fourth century B. C. E. Joseph, son of Tobias, an immensely wealthy tax-farmer, supported by the propertied class, was the first to venture openly to violate the provisions of the constitution. He and his followers observed the Law only in so far as it did not conflict with the money interest. It was only natural that they should have disregarded precepts based on ideals of humanity and justice. Their actions were prompted by greed for gain and power, and they had no scruples at all about violating principles which stood in their way.

Moreover, in their commercial and political dealings, the merchants and the tax-collectors were brought into intimate contact with the outside world and compelled to change their manners and adopt Greek as the international language of the civilized world of that time. Money power has always been the first to break national boundaries; it is by its very character cosmopolitan. Thus the Jewish money power of the period became Hellenistic not because it was interested in Greek culture, but

because it was by its nature cosmopolitan and the contemporary world happened to be Hellenistic.

The party of the Hellenists was therefore primarily the party of money-aristocracy, the inherent tendency of which was cosmopolitan. In opposition to this party there arose the party of Hassidim (the pious), consisting of common people—laborers and small artisans—led by the democratic intellectuals (scribes and priests of lower ranks). The Hassidim had every reason to be pious, because the Divine Law, the democratic constitution of the scribes, protected the oppressed and the downtrodden and imposed restrictions on the greed of landowners and usurers. Their hatred of the Godless (as the Hassidim called the prosperous and powerful Hellenists) was only natural. Their national enthusiasm, in opposition to the cosmopolitan tendency of the wealthy, is likewise intelligible.

It is self-evident that the root-cause of the conflict between these two parties was economic. It was caused by the hatred of the exploited and over-taxed common people against the wealthy class of merchants, tax-farmers, land-owners, and usurers who batten on the toil of the masses. The Hellenists, conscious of their superior economic power, grew more and more aggressive. Fearing the numerically much stronger opposition, they did not as yet dare to overthrow the democratic government, but the tension in the relationship between the parties grew more and more unbearable, and eventually a revolution broke out. The Hellenists, with the aid of Syrian Greeks, captured the office of high priest and thereby seized the supreme power of the country. Money Power was triumphant, but as yet only temporarily. The enraged masses revolted under the leadership of the Hasmonean

family, and after about thirteen years of civil war Hellenistic rule was overthrown and the Hasmonean family entrusted with sovereign authority.

This Maccabean revolt is commonly regarded as having been an uprising of the faithful Jews against an alien power—Antiochus Epiphanes, the Hellenists, and Jewish traitors and apostates. It is by now self-evident, however, that this traditional theory is but superficial and that the revolt was primarily of *economic* and *social* character. The interference of a foreign power was a purely adjunctory event. It was invited by the Hellenists in their struggle against the Hassidim.

What was the actual result of the Hasmonean Civil War? Did the Hassidim achieve the ends for which they had raised the standard of revolt? Did they crush the money-power of the Hellenists? Subsequent events in Jewish history demonstrate the truth that money-power is in the world of realities superior to the idealism of thinkers, that is to say, that while "spirit proposes, money disposes."

The Hasmonean Revolution was, morphologically speaking, a belated bourgeois revolution. It was ideologically prepared and guided by the revolutionary city intelligentsia. Just as the French Revolution broke out under the aegis of watchwords derived from Rousseau and other intellectual idealists, so was the banner of the Hasmonean revolt raised in the name of the ideals propagated by the scribes. The latter revolution, however, was not directed against the old nobility, as was the case in the French Revolution, but against plutocracy, the new money-aristocracy, and the priests of the higher ranks. The old nobility, as we have seen, no longer existed. Apart from this dissimilarity, the two revolutions were

analogous, and accordingly the results were almost identical. The downtrodden masses, driven by a revolutionary spirit, won military battles, but eventually they were in both cases cheated of their victory. The course of events from Judas Maccabeus to John Hyrcanus, and from Robespierre to Bonaparte, were of precisely similar historical significance. Out of the bourgeois revolution arises a new power—the Army, with its ambitious generals keeping the formless masses in subjection and using them as a means to military conquests. The administration passes from the hands of civil authorities into the hands of an ambitious military caste.

Following the victorious Hasmonean Revolution, the emergence of this new power—the Army—brought about a reshuffling of political forces. The Sadducees, successors of the Hellenists, allied themselves with the Army and, in the character of conservative nationalists, supported the imperialistic ambitions of the Hasmonean princes. Business and Imperialism have always been natural allies. The “strong hand” at home and military campaigns abroad secure and increase profits.

On the other hand, the Pharisees, spiritual heirs of the Hassidim, who brought the Maccabeans to power, withdrew their support from the princes, whose power was based now on the newly created Army, treating them with suspicion and even with contempt. The intellectual liberals and doctors of law looked down contemptuously upon ambitious militarists and prosperous plutocrats alike. As has always been the case, the party led by the intellectuals proved to be helpless in the struggle for power against the “Junkers and Pfaffen.” True, the Pharisees were at first the ruling party in the Sanhedrin, the legislative and judicial body, and the first Maccabean rulers



submitted themselves to the constitution as interpreted by the doctors of law. Now, however, in the presence of a strong army and a prosperous propertied middle class, this democratic government proved an illusion. The real forces behind the façade of Pharisaic democracy were Money and the Sword, and thus once more an open class war became inevitable.

We are today in a favorable position to follow up these social struggles with a better and deeper understanding, inasmuch as the peoples of modern Europe go through exactly analogous social difficulties and the political tendencies of contemporary civilization are similar to those of the Jewish civilization in the period that followed the Hasmonean revolt. With the growth of the money-power and the establishment of a strong military power, the social, political, and economic conflicts characteristic of every decaying democracy recurred with full force, though belatedly, in Israel's civilized life also. The last two hundred years of the political existence of the Jewish nation represented a period of wars and revolutions, the similarity of which to those today experienced by the peoples of European civilization is most striking.

The first distinctive feature of this period was the complexity of social life centered in the megalopolis. The life of the Jewish nation in this period went through a rapid disintegration. I have mentioned two parties—Pharisees and Sadducees—apart from the newly arisen power of the Army, but neither of them was homogeneous. Writing of these two chief parties, which more or less corresponded to the Liberals and Conservatives of today, Flavius Josephus, himself an enlightened liberal and a wavering pacifist, says, "The Sadducees were supported by the great and the opulent and the Pharisees by the

multitude" (Ant. B. 13 Ch. 18). But the growing diversity of interests among the "great and opulent," as well as among the "multitude," created within the parties many contending factions which in course of time manifested themselves in a bitter mutual struggle. The confusion became intolerable when a new revolutionary power—the Fourth Estate—arose and entered the political arena. This "seditious rabble" (as Josephus calls the revolutionaries of this period, who pressed for innovations) was a medley of rootless and stranded people. Uprooted peasants, oppressed workers, ruined business men, and *déclassé* priests and intellectuals belonged to it. Disappointed in democracy, the actual forces behind which were the money-power and the Army, they began to distrust the democratic Pharisees and to follow revolutionary leaders, demagogues and revivalist preachers of diverse types.

At first—that is to say—for a few decades after the Hasmonean revolt, the struggle for power took place between the two chief parties, the Pharisee democrats and the Sadducee plutocrats, the latter supported by the military imperialists. In the time of John Hyrcanus (135–140 B. C.) it came to a decisive clash, and the results were fatal to the democrats. Instigated by the Sadducees, the king "abrogated the constitution of the Pharisees and enjoined a penalty on all who shall observe them." The Hasmonean prince, a nephew of that Judas Maccabeus who had led the revolutionary Hassidim against the Hellenistic money-aristocracy and their Syrian allies, was thus won over by that very power against which his uncle had fought so bitterly. This course of development was inevitable. Democracy is inherently republican and incompatible with monarchic sovereignty. Democracy is

in theory based on education and equality, whereas monarchy is based on heredity and military power. The conservative plutocrats and the high officials were, as we have seen, natural allies of the military monarchy. The outcome of the clash between these opposing forces was a foregone conclusion.

The immediate circumstances which brought about the open revolt of the sovereign ruler, supported by the conservatives against the liberals, are of great significance. A Pharisee called upon the prince to resign from the high priesthood, as his mother was a prisoner of war, and he was thereby disqualified, according to the Jewish constitution, from holding the pontifical office. The Pharisaic court found the allegation unfounded and sentenced the appellant to flogging on a charge of defamation. The humiliated prince was so aroused by this verdict that he listened to the advice of his Sadducean friends and abrogated the constitution.

The eternal antagonism between Spirit and Force is here clearly expressed in a form characteristic of all modern times: the critical and leveling tendency of the megalopolitan intelligentsia disregards unique personalities or conditions. Before the Law all men are equal. Spiritual principles such as those of justice and equality are inviolable. There is no difference between a prince and a commoner. Thus, the Pharisee who had insulted the sovereign ruler was judged and sentenced by the same law that protects the commoner also. And supposing the court had found that the accusation of the disrespectful, carping intellectual was true, it is obvious that the prince would have been ordered to submit to the law and resign his pontifical office.

On the other hand, there stood the prince, sovereign

ruler of the nation, and acclaimed as a national hero after returning at the head of his victorious army from successful campaigns. This prince, whose will on the battlefield was inviolable law, naturally would not submit himself to the orders of diverse carpers and critics and refused to be fettered in the conduct of the state by a legislative body the members of which were concerned with one thing only—the Law. Moreover, the Pharisees were indifferent, and even averse, to military conquests, and never thought in terms of foreign policy, whereas the army by its character, and the Sadducees by their economic interests, were bent on military adventure and territorial expansion. The Pharisees were faithful to the spirit of Ezra, the scribe who sacrificed the political interests of the Jews to his abstract ideas of race purity and national superiority. For this reason Ezra rejected the Samaritans who wanted to join the Jewish nation, and he severed every link that connected the Jews with their neighbors. How different was the policy of John Hyrcanus. He not only did not refuse association with the neighbors, but actually forced them (including those very Samaritans whom Ezra had rejected) to adopt the Jewish religion as a means of securing his conquests. The scribes were busy with the spiritual moulding of the Jewish community in accordance with a preconceived abstract system, and did not understand political necessities in a world of wars and conquests. So long as Judea was poor and detached from world politics, the efforts of the scribes achieved certain results (for which reason the Persian period of the Great Assembly was so idealized by Pharisaic teachers), but as soon as Judea grew prosperous and became an important factor in the political and economic world, the aspirations of the scribes were inevitably doomed. Uni-



lateral renunciation of force politics usually means serfdom and self-annihilation. Thus, had Judea been left in the hands of the Pharisees its ruin would have become inevitable. But the Army and the Sadducees did not renounce force, and in an unequal contest they seized the reins of government. Army and Money triumphed.

The Pharisees did not acquiesce, but attempted several times to regain their power. They conspired secretly against the prince and his allies. The reign of King Alexander (son of John and brother of Aristobulus, who ruled but one year and was the first to proclaim himself king) was marked by internal strife. The robust war-lord, who had won many battles and considerably extended the boundaries of his kingdom, would not make concessions to his internal adversaries, but crushed the conspiracy with an iron hand. He ordered a general massacre of the Pharisaic leaders, and after several bloody clashes he succeeded in restoring order. His wife Alexandra, who succeeded him, made peace with the Pharisees, and in the nine years of her rule the democrats became temporarily the ruling party. The emigres returned from exile and the surviving leaders of the Pharisees regained control over the Sanhedrin. It was the rabbi, the doctor of law, and not the war lord, who now conducted the affairs of the state. Military conquests and foreign policy were neglected. Instead, public education became compulsory and law was established on a strict footing. Action was taken against all those who had been guilty of the massacre in Alexandra's time, without regard to their political or military merits. The military party and the conservatives now conspired in their turn and made secret preparations for a *putsch*. Josephus' vivid description of these preparations, and of the consternation that they caused

among the frightened democrats (Ant. B. 13 Ch. 24), is illuminating and strongly reminiscent of corresponding political events of today. So long as the old queen lived the militarists refrained from open attack, but immediately on her death a bloody civil war broke out. Her younger son, Aristobulus, able leader of the Junkers, defeated his weak brother, Hyrcanus, legitimate heir to the throne, and was crowned king. The democratic intellectuals looked down upon these dynastic wars with contempt and aversion. The Pharisees did not mind being ruled by a foreign power so long as they were allowed to study the Law and to conduct their communal life according to the precepts of the rabbis. They actually sent a petition to this effect to Pompey, the Roman general.

Rome appears now as an important external factor interfering with the normal development of Israel. She put an end to the imperialistic expansion of the Jews. In the time of Hasmonean rule the boundaries of Judea were more extensive than those in David's time, though the process of expansion had only begun. The military and economic imperialists had no regard for ethnographic and linguistic considerations. The large revenues they derived from conquered provinces enabled them to hire mercenaries for further conquest, and the North still lay open to them. It is very probable that if it had not been for Rome a great Jewish Empire would have arisen. Aristobulus, scenting the danger which threatened his imperialistic aspirations, put up a fight against Pompey. He was, however, defeated and banished to Rome. Hyrcanus was confirmed as high priest and ethnarch (the title king was denied him) and the Sanhedrin was left in the hands of the Pharisaic pacifists.

This interference of Rome nevertheless failed to thwart in Israel the social forces that are at work in the corresponding period of all civilizations. In spite of Rome, the Jews, as all civilized nations have done, went through a period of transition from Napoleonism to Caesarism. About 120 years after the Hasmonean bourgeois revolution, democracy and money-power decayed, and the two forces engaged in the struggle for power became instead the Fourth Estate and the military adventurer of Caesarian mould—the latter supported by Property through fear of the revolutionary proletariat. The peoples of Western civilization are now in the throes of an analogous struggle. Consequently, the next chapter on the proletarian revolutions and Fascism within Judaism will have a special interest.

## X. PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS AND FASCISM WITHIN JUDAISM

With the decay of democratic institutions and the disintegration of the party system, social upheavals and revolutions break out and chaos sets in, paving the way for dictatorship. Ambitious and energetic adventurers take advantage of the chaotic social conditions and, with determination and ruthless force, struggle for personal power and the absolute rule within the state. This period of revolutions and upheavals is transitional to Caesarism, which, according to Spengler, is the ultimate and final form of government in all civilizations. Caesarism, emerging from the chaos, rests on the personal forces at the command of adventurous fortuitous leaders. National armies are transformed into private military formations blindly following the Leader. Their tactics and actions, dictated by the Leader, grow more and more unscrupulous, barbarous, and destructive. The strong will of the Leader is all-pervading and the slightest resistance is ruthlessly crushed.

The Fourth Estate—rootless mass of ruined peasants and formless proletariat of the cosmopolis—is the new social force that breaks democracy and creates that social chaos out of which the dictatorship of chance leaders emerges. In their despair and hopelessness, the uprooted and downtrodden masses are driven into the arms of adventurous demagogues and revivalist preachers and fight blindly for their salvation. It is immaterial what watch-



words gain currency so long as they hold out a promise for a better future. Destruction of the existing institutions and forms of life is the chief impulse. The cosmopolitan demon drives the shifting human masses into motion and they perish in self-abnegation, no matter under what flag. The outcome is, on the one hand, the second religiousness, and on the other—Caesarism. The latter, no less than the former, is, again, primitive and completely formless. Caesars may adopt old forms and institutions, but their spirit is dead already and lacks symbolical significance. Significant only is the personal power that the dictator wields. It is the return of a fully developed world to primitive conditions. In the pre-cultural primitive stage there are latent possibilities of a natural growth. Now, however, in the second primitive stage, there is no further hope for an upward development. The nations, after having realized and exhausted all their political possibilities, become no more than passive objects of world history.

This is Spengler's description of political events and phenomena observable in all decaying civilizations. It applies with astounding accuracy to the happenings in the last period of Jewish political history.

The economic conditions of Palestine during this period were fraught with the same dangers that face all civilized peoples. The concentration of capital proceeded rapidly. The prosperity of the few was accompanied by the poverty of the masses. In the many modern cities which Palestine boasted in those days, the opulent merchants, big landowners, unscrupulous tax-farmers, and usurers lived luxuriously in expensive palaces provided with baths and parks, while laborers toiled for about a half dinar (fourpence) a day and lived in slums.

The peasants, overtaxed by tax-farmers and exploited by usurers, were unable to support their families. Many of them, especially the youth, were forced to look for employment in the cities, and thus the labor market there became glutted. Wages fell and unemployment was growing. The uprooted peasants and the despondent proletariat joined in increasing numbers into revolutionary gangs and secret societies of desperadoes, roving all over the country, burning and looting. In their intolerable distress they were ready to follow their leaders anywhere. Innumerable demagogues, impostors, and preachers arose, appealing to the sentiments and instincts of the seditious rabble and inciting them in the name of all sorts of contradictory social and national ideals. A confusing variety of political parties and religious sects arose and fought one another. Although Josephus calls the leaders of these revolutionary movements and their followers robbers, bandits, thieves, and so on, they exhibited, as he himself admits, extraordinary heroism and enthusiasm. They seldom surrendered alive, and they preferred death in liberty to a life of bondage.

In opposition to this "rabble," or, as Spengler calls it, the "rootless mob," the bourgeois classes united very often. It is known that the Sadducees joined the Pharisees in their opposition to early Christianity—and the latter was nothing but one of the revolutionary movements of that chaotic world. But the bourgeoisie itself was broken up into many parties and sects. Apart from the Sadducees, who represented the *grande bourgeoisie*, and the Pharisees, who were the party of the intellectuals and the *petite bourgeoisie*, there were intermediary parties with many and diverse programs and schemes. No party was marked off distinctly from others. The Sadducees and

Pharisees themselves were not homogeneous parties, but were divided into several factions and sects. The whole social life was in a state of flux, and all institutions and forms of government were in process of disintegration. Spiritual values were debased while the primitive instincts, repressed in the course of cultural and civilized life, were freely indulged and gratified. "Justice and truth were banished the earth; nothing prevailed but malice and deceit; and mankind were so blinded by their inordinate passions that they could no longer discern right from wrong or good from evil" (Ant. B. 16 Ch. 17). To bring order into such chaos and anarchy can be achieved either by intelligence or by crude force. Intelligence has up to now failed to reintegrate life, and Spengler rightly points out that the outcome of the above-mentioned conditions, which have recurred in every late civilization, has invariably been Caesarism—the dictatorship of strong fortuitous leaders who, by force of their personality and backed by a disciplined private army, decide the fate of nations. Does this apply also to the political history of the Jewish civilization? It actually does, and with a striking exactitude. Herod the Great was a typical representative of the modern dictators. His personality, career, and achievements do not differ at all from those of the "contemporary" Caesars of any other civilization.

Josephus writes of him: "Herod kept his people in due subjection partly by awe and fear and partly through attachment and interest; for he was a prince of most inflexible severity in the punishments of delinquents as he was of unbounded liberality in promoting the public good. . . . His main view seems to have been directed to the promotion of his own interests and the gratifica-

tion of his ambition in perpetuating his name by these memorials of his magnificence and liberality" (*Ibid.* xv; xii). This description of Herod's character fits in completely with Spengler's conception of a dictator of Caesarian mould. All the tendencies characteristic of the period of "Formation of Caesarism"—victory of force politics; increasing primitiveness of political forms; inward decline of nations into a formless populace and of their constitutions into an *imperium* of ever-increasing crudity of despotism—find their most forcible expression in Herod's time.

The Pharisaic tradition regards Herod as having been an alien king and a barbarous tyrant. But the liberal democrats have always treated the military dictators with contempt and animosity. It is, therefore, no wonder that the Pharisees were prejudiced against Herod. It may be a fact that Herod was of Idumaeans descent, although his private historian tries to convince us that he was descended from an old Jewish noble family. In any case, physiological genealogy is of no significance in the make-up of dictators of the Caesarian type. In fact, most modern dictators are of obscure origin. On the other hand, the Idumaeans of Hasmonean times were as much Jews as the Bavarians or Austrians of today are Germans. They spoke the same language, adopted the Jewish religion, and, in the wars against Rome, vied with other Jews in patriotism. The fanatic opposition of the Pharisees to Herod had nothing to do with his descent. They were as fanatically opposed, if not more so, to Alexander Jannaeus, who was a direct descendant of the popular Hasmonean family. The opposition to Alexander was of the same origin as that to Herod. It took its rise from the eternal, irreconcilable antagonism that exists between



spirit and brute force, between the pacifism of the intellectuals and the militarism of men of action.

Herod even in his youth displayed characteristics typical of a dictator of Caesarian mould. As the young governor of Galilee, he routed the revolutionary "robbers" roving in the mountains and exterminated them ruthlessly. Their chief, Ezechia, was put to death. "This enterprise procured Herod a very distinguished share of reputation and the people considered him as the man to whom they were indebted for the secure and happy enjoyment of their lives, liberties, and professions" (*Ibid.* iv, xvii). It is self-evident that Josephus meant by "the people" the propertied class that has always supported the strong hand directed against the "seditious rabble." The liberal democrats, however, although equally opposed to the revolutionaries, were shocked at the news of Ezechia's execution without trial, and summoned Herod before the Sanhedrin to account for his impetuous conduct. As befitted a prospective dictator, Herod appeared in court armed and surrounded by a bodyguard, hoping to intimidate the judges. The scene at the trial, as described by Josephus, was psychologically most remarkable. It reminds us of many similar political trials of our own period. Had it not been for his father, Antipater, a man of obscure origin who had risen to eminence in a most adventurous manner, Herod would have at once attempted a *coup d'état*. Antipater, who functioned behind the feeble Hyrcanus' back as actual ruler of the country, had nothing to win from a change of government, and therefore dissuaded his son from rash action. Immediately on Antipater's death, however, a bloody revolution broke out, and eventually, with the aid of a private army, Herod captured Jerusalem and became

dictator. "As soon as he had obtained the sovereign rule of Judea he made it his business to provide for those who had espoused his interests while he was in the rank and condition of a private man. He also took care to revenge himself on those whom he knew to have been his enemies, insomuch as hardly a day passed without capital executions" (*Ibid.* xv, i). What a resemblance to the procedure of all successful modern dictators!

Herod's government was based on military force and a secret police. He ruthlessly crushed the slightest opposition. Once a conspiracy was hatched against the king. The spies discovered it and informed him just before he entered the theatre wherein his assassination was to be attempted. The conspirators with concealed daggers were caught and brought before the king. "They alleged that they were not engaged in any criminal combination to gratify any passion or interest, but in solemn league for the common good and the defence of their laws." In consequence, "they were led away to execution by the king's guard" (*Ibid.* xv, xi). Even concentration camps of the modern sort were not unknown in Herod's time. In order to secure peace and prevent revolts, Herod "enjoined every man diligently to attend to his own concerns, prohibiting select assemblies and fixing spies in all places of resort to take into custody all who should disobey these orders and cause them to be punished with utmost rigor. Those who could by no means be brought to acquiesce with his schemes of government were persecuted with the greatest severity, while such as were more moderate were put to an oath of allegiance and dismissed. By this means he brought the majority out of fear to a compliance with him, but those who had the resolution to contend the point and stig-

matized his conduct were taken off by some device or other" (*Ibid.* xv, xiii). This means, in plain European language, that those who refused to shout "Heil Herod" or ventured to criticize his regime were made to disappear.

That Herod succeeded in keeping the country in subjection for thirty-three years, in spite of all the contradictory ideas and conflicting movements that were undermining the social structure of Judea, was due to his ruthless and unscrupulous regime. Compromise and relaxation of control would inevitably have resulted in revolution and anarchy. The repressed lower layer of the subconscious would have been awakened by the agitators and preachers of rival parties and religious sects, and the masses would have been swept by passions and panics aroused by slogans, half-truths, fantastic hopes, and hypocritical criticisms.

Generosity actuated by a craving for personal fame and glory is another trait of great dictators, and Herod displayed it on many occasions. When famine broke out in Judea, Herod sold his silver and gold plate in order to assist the poor. "He took care that the poor should be provided amply not only with food but also raiment, as they had been destitute of wool for clothing as for corn for food. . . . By procuring this relief, he enhanced himself in the esteem of the people as a prince of consummate wisdom, generosity and humanity" (*Ibid.* xv, xii).

Against crime, too, Herod took ruthless action. House-breaking, robbery, kidnaping are common crimes in this period of dying civilizations, and all dictators try to eradicate them by extraordinary measures. Against house-breakers Herod decreed "That all offenders of that kind

should be sold for slaves even to strangers." As this decree violated the traditional law that forbids selling Jews either into perpetual slavery, or to strangers, there was a natural outcry against it. The legalistic opponents "construed this new law as a deliberate contempt in Herod against established practice." They did not ask whether the "established practice" was sufficient to cope with the actual facts of real life. Herod, however, was concerned with realities rather than with theories. He had no scruples in transgressing the law when for political reasons it became necessary. He ruthlessly suppressed all ideological disputes. No abstract ideals or traditional considerations had ever put restrictions on his internal or foreign policy. When he showed respect for traditional institutions or popular sentiments, he did it for political reasons only.

Herod refrained from deliberately offending popular susceptibilities. For political ends he even tried to win the confidence of his subjects, though he never allowed any actual interference with politics on their part. The ascetic Essenes, whose utopian mode of life and political renunciation removed them from the arena of political life, he left unmolested. He was uninterested in the ideology of mystical hermits, but the Sanhedrin he deprived of all political powers and thus rendered it harmless. The high priest he appointed arbitrarily, and wealthy aristocrats were kept in fear by putting the recalcitrant among them to death and confiscating their property. He convoked the "General Assembly" from time to time in order to give it an account of his activities, and thereby to create a public opinion in his favor. But no voting or criticism was permitted. On one occasion, after a tour abroad in which he had successfully intervened on be-



half of the Jews against Syrian and Greek "anti-Semites," he convoked the Great Assembly (a kind of Hitler's Reichstag) and "laid before them a particular account of his voyage and the very important grant he had obtained for the Jews in Asia, by which they were exempted from the impositions of the Jonians and fully confirmed in their ancient national privileges. He represented to them the several and great advantages they had derived from his government and pointed out that the welfare of his subjects was the grand spring of his actions. . . . With loudest exclamations, the people testified their loyalty and most fervently prayed for the prosperity of their king" (*Ibid.* xvi, v). How remarkably fascistic are these tactics of creating public opinion in favor of the dictator! A pity that Josephus does not mention how many detectives and legions guarded the Great Assembly and how strong was the bodyguard of the dictator himself.

Herod's foreign policy was equally typical of a dictator of Caesarian mould. He was an imperialist and strove for military conquest, but he was blind neither to facts nor to the actual co-relation of political forces. He never engaged in fanatic wars. Abstract ideas or romantic hopes, whether religious or national, were never the driving forces of his actions. Hunger for power and fame was the chief factor that also determined his foreign policy. He had no sentimental or idealistic ties with the past. To conquer and to command was the only ideal he pursued, and he did it with unscrupulous determination and brutal consistency.

Herod understood that a war with Rome would be suicidal. With characteristic shrewdness and diplomatic dexterity he secured the goodwill and friendship of several

contending Roman emperors, and with their sanction he extended the boundaries of his kingdom, which formally was a dependency of Rome. He controlled the Palestinian sea-coast and collected import and export taxes. Thanks to his successful foreign policies there was prosperity in the land, though it was not enjoyed by the people as a whole. He was thus in a position to spend enormous sums on mercenary legions, the construction of cities and magnificent buildings, and on diplomatic bribes. His neighbors both feared and respected him, and those who envied and hated him had to suppress their feelings; he was too powerful and dangerous to offend. Even the famous Egyptian queen, Cleopatra, failed in her intrigues against Herod. The Roman emperors, considering him an important factor in world politics, refrained from annoying him. Herod utilized his political power, too, for the purpose of protecting the rights of Jews living outside his kingdom, and several times he intervened successfully on their behalf.

Herod may have cherished the dreams of a great Jewish empire, and probably he would have achieved that dream had it not been for the Romans. Considered in conjunction with the mighty Roman Empire of his time, such a dream was fantastic, and Herod with his keen sense for the possible did not attempt to realize it.

To sum up, both in character and in conduct Herod was one with the great imperialistic dictators who arise in all dying civilizations. The adventurous career of his youth; the form of his government; his well-disciplined but inwardly formless private army; the brutality he displayed against his rivals (he murdered his wife and several sons); the shrewdness and dexterity of his diplomacy; the generous liberality he displayed toward his associates

and allies; the magnificence of his buildings (even the rabbis used to say that "one who had not seen the Temple of Herod never saw a really beautiful structure")—these traits of his personality, and the grand scale on which his ambitious plans were carried out, suggest most clearly that Herod was a genuine Jewish representative of the Caesarian tendency inherent in all cosmopolitan civilizations. Herod made provisions that his funeral should be of "magnificent solemnity that ever prince had."

Josephus gives the following description of the funeral:

"The body was carried upon a golden bier adorned with precious stones, covered with purple, a diadem upon his head, and over that a golden crown with a sceptre in his hands, his son and relations marching by the side. Next to these were the soldiers in their proper distinctions and divisions. First the bodyguard, then the Thracians, after them the Germans, and next the Galatians, all of them fully armed and arranged as for a battle, and behind them the rest of the army" (*Ibid.* xvii, viii). Thus was the body of this dictator carried to rest in a manner harmonizing with the magnificent career of his life. He lived and died a typical Caesarian dictator.

Herod's death was fatal to the Jews. There was no one worthy to replace him, and the government of the Jewish people, like that of any other people in this particular period of decaying civilization, depended on the personality of the leader rather than upon traditional governmental institutions. In Herod's time the government was already inwardly formless. He did not discard the old forms and institutions, but their spirit was dead; they were void of any symbolic significance. Formally speaking, he did not abolish the Sanhedrin or the pontifical office, but he did make them the blind tools of his

dictatorial rule; they were merely ornamental. The magnificent structure of Herod's temple concealed the spiritual poverty that reigned in it in his time. Herod's personality was the only significant power. Traditional institutions, so long as they remain "in form," can do without exceptional leaders, but once they have lost their inward force and disintegrated the fate of nations depends on fortuitous personalities. They make or unmake history. Herod's powerful personality imposed itself on the Jewish civilization and superseded its decaying institutions, but when he died without leaving a worthy successor his kingdom inevitably relapsed into chaos and anarchy. This danger is imminent in every dictatorship. What has happened in Spain in the last few years illustrates most vividly the events which characterized Jewish life after Herod's death.

Herod's successor, his son, Archelaus, was immediately overwhelmed with complaints, petitions, suggestions, threats, and rebellious demands. "Some imposed a desire to be eased of their taxes, others to have their friends released who had been imprisoned by Herod. Some exclaimed against duties and impositions that were laid upon provisions, and diverse pleas were offered upon diverse pretences" (*Ibid.* xvii, x). As soon as Archelaus implied his readiness to make compromises and concessions, the people, or rather their innumerable leaders, rightly interpreted this as a sign of weakness and became more and more daring in their conflicting demands. Since it was impossible to fulfil all of these, the people revolted, and the new prince had to resort to armed force. But it was too late. When the prince went to Rome to seek confirmation of his rule, the country fell into a tumultuous state. "Every new band of mutineers was for setting



up new kings . . . the Jews were rent by feuds and factions amongst themselves" (*Ibid.* xvii, xii). The destructive demon of the rootless rabble flared up again. "Indeed a spirit of outrage, or rather epidemical madness, possessed the multitude." Carried away by the inflammatory slogans of patriotic fanatics, sectarian preachers, fiery demagogues, and impostors, the people went roaming about the country, burning, robbing, and murdering. "The intestine broils prevailed to such a degree of ferocious madness that the citizens were sheathing their swords in the bowels of each other" (*Ibid.* xviii, i). How characteristic of all civilized peoples are these phenomena of social life! It is the century of upheavals and proletarian revolutions following the decay of Democracy and the growth of the Fourth Estate.

All the efforts of the Jewish intellectual pacifists were doomed to failure. In the political, economic, and religious madhouse they still clung to the abstract ideas of democratic government and were completely indifferent to foreign policy. They sent ambassadors to the Roman Emperor with the request that "they might be delivered from the kingly and like forms of government and might be added to Syria and put under the authority of such presidents as should be sent there . . . for that it would thereby be made evident whether they be really a seditious people and generally fond of innovations, or whether they would live in an orderly manner, if they might have governors of any sort of moderation set over them" (*Ibid.* xvii, xii). In such chaotic conditions did these optimistic idealists place reliance on the law and a foreign governor! Their desire was eventually fulfilled and Palestine became a Roman province, ruled by a foreign governor, but their dreams of peace and justice

proved to be the illusion they really were. The democratic Pharisees, in their complacent optimism and political blindness, did not understand that the renunciation of power means unconditional submission to those who refuse to renounce. The governors, generally speaking, were not moderate as they had hoped, but avaricious and cruel, and the people grew more and more seditious. Thus the intellectual Pharisees shared the delusions experienced by the utopian pacifists of all decaying civilizations. Having disastrously failed in the conduct of the state, they were swept away by the revolutionary spirit of the masses, and patriotic terrorists and fiery revolutionaries thus became masters of the street and the countryside alike. The rule of the Fourth Estate was established.

To relate the happenings in Jewish life prior to the destruction of Jerusalem is beyond the scope of this book. We are concerned here merely with the interpretation of Jewish history and with the events narrated by Josephus, who, as actor in as well as observant spectator of the great tragedy of destruction, does not require any interpretation. His book of *Wars* can be rightly understood only in the light of Spengler's morphological conception of history.

The political life of Israel was, as we have seen, completely disintegrated and broken up into parties and factions, sects and gangs, all murdering one another in blind fanaticism. Before the very eyes of the enemy the revolutionary zealots and other factions were destroying one another. There were also secret terrorists and political kidnapers. "The Sicarii, denominated from *sica*, alluding to the short sword they wore, were intermixing with the multitude at festivals and despatching whom they pleased without difficulty or danger of discovery" (*Ibid.*

xx, vii). "During the war their numbers (those of the Sicarii) increased daily by the accession of an abandoned rabble that came flocking in to join them" (*Wars*, Bk. v. Ch. iii). When Titus besieged Jerusalem "the zealots resembled the fury of a wild beast that for want of prey satiates its ravenous appetite by devouring as it were its very self" (*Wars*, vi, i). This is a characteristic picture of any proletarian revolution drawn by democratic liberals. Hunger, despair, thirst for revenge swept away the upper layers of consciousness, and thus the lower instincts and impulses of the masses broke out, blindly spreading death and destruction. Three proletarian dictators (Simon Bargiora, John Gishala, and Eleazar), fighting one another, set up a reign of terror in Jerusalem. All slaves were liberated, the propertied classes were terrorized, and the Fourth Estate triumphed—in blind self-annihilation. In the last instance the rival dictators buried the hatchet and united in the life-and-death struggle against Rome, but their fate was in any case foredoomed. Appeals to reason were of no avail; they were drowned in the din of war-cries and the rattle of swords. Those of the educated who managed to keep their heads above this chaos, and Josephus was one, escaped to the enemy. In these circumstances, what chance did the Jews have against Rome? This analysis makes it abundantly clear that the destruction of the political life of the Jews was self-inflicted rather than caused by Rome. Rome merely intensified the party strife and widened the gulf between the classes. However, even without Rome there would have been no peace in Judea. The self-annihilation process began with the inevitable party politics that had been introduced into Jewish life long before Rome reached the shores of Palestine.

History follows a set course. From the rule of nobles, priests, and kings in its cultural stages, Israel passed through the theocratic democracy of the Third Estate (Spirit and Money) and ended, after a brief dictatorship, in the rule of the Fourth Estate. A return to past forms of government was an historical impossibility.

"With the completely formed state, moreover, history has lain down to sleep. Man becomes again a plant cleaving to the soil and enduring. The timeless village, the eternal peasant comes to the fore, while in the cosmopolis, in the empty housing of an extinct soul, a historyless humankind nestles in. They live from hand to mouth, patiently enduring. Masses are trampled upon in the battle of the great conquerors. While in the upper places war goes on, there, in the depth, the people pray with the piety of the second religiousness that has overcome all scepticism. There, in the souls—and only there—the world peace, the peace of God, the blissful happiness of monks and hermits, became reality." With certain qualifications, to be dealt with in following chapters, this, Spengler's dramatic description of the final extinction of all civilizations, applies also to Israel's historical fate.

About fourteen centuries, according to Spengler, represent the duration of every culture, and this is approximately the span of time that it had also taken Israel to go through all the epochs of her historical life. After five hundred years of Early Culture (youth), three hundred years of Late Culture (maturity), and six hundred years of Civilization (age), all the possibilities of Israel's cultural soul were exhausted. The second century C. E.—i. e., about a century after the destruction of the Temple—marks the termination of Israel's life-course. In this century the last attempts to revive political self-government



were made. They were abortive, and after Bar Kochba, who led the last political uprising against foreign oppression, Israel's political life was completely extinct. The Jews became merely a passive object of world history. They were trampled upon in the battle of great conquerors, patiently enduring.

The political extinction of Israel coincided with the transformation of her second religiousness into a rigid organization—the Synagogue. The fanaticism of the political zealots and terrorists was inwardly related to the fanaticism of the heroes of the second religiousness. The numerous political factions and gangs had their counterpart in the many contemporary religious sects. Both lived in a world of illusions, whether political or religious. They had lost contact with the historical world of realities. The spiritual and political Kingdom of Heaven superseded the earthly kingdom. Thus in the second century C. E., after the last fires of a setting sun, both tendencies spent themselves. The Jews have since then become Ghetto Jews—a people of Fellaheen—and their religion a religion of Fellaheen.

When, in the thirteenth century B. C. E., Israel invaded Palestine and woke up to historical life, Babylon and Egypt were already exhausted civilizations incapable of resisting the onslaughts of primitive peoples. Now, fourteen centuries later, after a glorious historical career, Israel's position was the same as that of Egypt or Babylon had been in the time of its own childhood. Israel too had grown old, and because of senility was no longer capable of taking active part in world politics. The people had become a ready prey to the young conquerors, just as Babylon and Egypt before, and as Rome was soon afterwards to become. The Ghetto, centered round the syna-

gogue, and walled off from the outside world, has become the spiritual home of the Jews. The rabbis, the Jewish Brahmins, the perfectly "finished" men, have controlled it, whereas the inert masses of Ghetto Jews blindly following the rabbis have prayed, dreamt, and hoped for messianic salvation. "While in the upper places war goes on, there in the depth the people pray with the piety of the second religiousness that has overcome all sceptics. There, within the souls—and only there—the peace of God, the blissful happiness of monks and hermits, became reality."

## XI. GHETTO JEWS—A “PEOPLE OF FELLAHEEN”

The chapter in which Spengler described the Jews as the “people of Fellaheen” is the best of all that he has written on Jewish history. It is true that the Jews, after they had been transformed into Fellaheen, created nothing essentially new, and that in this timeless period of Israel’s history an inward development was no longer discernible. In the preceding epochs of Israel’s life-course decades had been of historical significance, whereas in the life of Ghetto Jews centuries were of no consequence. Spengler is undoubtedly right in contending that the Ghetto Jews exhibit characteristics which are morphologically analogous to those of all other peoples of Fellaheen, such as the Chinese, Indians, Arabs, and others.

But Spengler is definitely wrong in regarding the twelfth century C. E. as the time when the Jews were transformed into a people of Fellaheen. Interpreting Judaism as an integral part of Magian culture, he had no alternative but to make the termination of the life-course of Judaism coincide with that of Arab civilization. According to Spengler, therefore, Jehudah Halevi, who reduced philosophy to the status of a handmaid of devout theology, and Maimonides, who reduced the whole mass of Jewish doctrines to a complete and rigid system, marked the definite conclusion of Judaism and its transformation into a religion of Fellaheen. According to *our* outline of Israel’s life-course, on the other hand, the cul-

tural extinction of Israel had taken place a whole millennium earlier, in the second century C. E. Now the question arises whether the course of Jewish history after the second century could be reconciled with Spengler's general conception of History as applied in this book. Can the Jewish history of this millennium, as well as Israel's history prior to the second century, be interpreted in terms of historical morphology? How then could the supposedly flourishing cultural life of the Jews of Moorish Spain be reconciled with our idea that Judaism, many centuries before that "golden period" of Jewish history, had ceased to be culturally creative? It is remarkable that only in the light of Jewish history as expounded here do all these apparent difficulties not arise, and also that in the light of this same conception the whole of Jewish history—from the end of the second century onwards as well as during the preceding epochs—can be comprehensively understood. We have seen that Spengler had to distort the historical facts of Israel's cultural development in order to fit them into his preconceived scheme. We shall see further that for the same reasons he also distorted the phenomena of Jewish life in the millennium between 200 and 1200 C. E.

It is not by accident that we devote only two chapters to the last eighteen hundred years of Jewish history, while five were occupied with the first fourteen hundred years. The reason for this apparently disproportionate division lies in the very nature of our historical conception. In the first fourteen hundred years Israel went through a most eventful development, each century differing essentially from the others and each epoch producing new distinctive types. In these fourteen centuries Israel's cultural soul expressed itself in spiritual, economic, and po-



litical forms that, in the course of their development, changed with every succeeding epoch. The forms of life of every such period represented a more advanced stage of Israel's life-course than had its predecessor. In the last eighteen hundred years, however, we see no such sequence of forms of expression. There is no longer either inward or upward evolution. A straight line of evolution can be traced from Deborah and the popular bards and minstrels through the kings and priests, the great prophets and Deuteronomic reformers, Ezra and Nehemiah, Job and Ecclesiastes, Daniel and the apocalyptists, Pharisaic democrats and Sadducean aristocrats, the rootless cosmopolitan intelligentsia and Essene ascetics, military dictators and the terrorists of the Fourth Estate, and, finally, the heroes of the second religiousness and the rabbis of the synagogue. Since the second century, however, after all cultural possibilities of Israel were exhausted, no new types whatever have been produced and no new tendencies have sprung up. It was not difficult to divide the first fourteen hundred years into epochs each one of which manifested itself in different forms of expression, but in the last eighteen centuries no succession either of forms or of human types is discernible. Thus the author of Job is inconceivable as belonging to Deborah's time, and the prophet Samuel as belonging to that of the Pharisaic liberals. However, in the last eighteen hundred years of Ghetto life there has not been an event or a human type that could not have recurred in any one of these eighteen centuries. And they *did* recur, as we shall see.

We are in agreement, then, with Spengler that peoples of Fellaheen are timeless and, from the point of view of culture, devoid of historical significance. Nevertheless, the concept of people of Fellaheen requires modification.

It is true that no return is possible to cultural epochs when the creative forces were chiefly instinctive. A people of Fellaheen can never produce a Deborah or an Isaiah, a Homer or a Sophocles, the Eddas or a Shakespeare. Works of *civilization*, however, can be reproduced, and the intellectual life of Megalopolis can be revived, even after the transformation of the people into what Spengler calls a "people of Fellaheen." Moreover, the movements that arise in reaction to artificial city life may arise again at any time, provided the conditions are propitious. The social and spiritual tendencies exhibited by peoples of Fellaheen are not new, and they are likely to express themselves in forms similar to those of the original period of civilization. True, the second religiousness transformed itself into a rigid organization (whether church, synagogue, or sect), and its spirit to a great extent permeated the whole of life, but from time to time it was capable of breaking forth into a movement that bore all the characteristics of the original second religiousness.

The works originating in the brains of the scribes of different periods (teachers of the law, authors of books of wisdom, and the apocalyptists) continued to be produced throughout the ages following Judaism's transformation into a religion of Fellaheen. Also, the messianic movements of the second religiousness sprang up in later Jewish history. Spengler himself was struck by the similarity of Hassidism to early Christianity, though he offers no explanation of this remarkable analogy. Finally, the events resulting from the impact of an alien civilization upon Judaism—the first of which had, as we have seen, taken place before the second century—recurred in astoundingly similar fashion and with the same results

wherever Judaism in its later history came into intimate contact with an alien civilization.

Consequently, the term "cultural extinction," as accepted here, denotes the exhaustion of *instinctual* prime forces but not of intellectual capacity. Granted peoples of Fellaheen are incapable of regaining their cultural creativeness and of producing new human types, they still retain their *intellectual* creativeness and are capable of producing spiritual works similar to those produced in the original period of civilization. In short, cultures are fated to die but civilizations may live interminably. Peoples of Fellaheen are "old" civilized people, productive of works of civilization, rather than mere ashes of burnt-out cultures.

The observed *political* extinction of all "old" civilized peoples does not contradict this contention. Peoples of Fellaheen are averse to force politics and renounce it not because their civilizations have died out, but because they are civilized. They are, politically, no longer "in form" because their instinctual forces have run dry. They continue to cherish political hopes and to produce political programs, but they are no longer "racy" enough to play a role in world politics. In the face of ferocious young peoples bent on conquest they are naturally helpless. No wonder, therefore, that the peoples of Fellaheen become merely passive objects in the political world. Under the influence of a young foreign civilization, a political awakening may take place, but so long as they remain isolated the peoples of Fellaheen display no real political tendencies.

Introduced thus, the "mysterious" fate of Ghetto Jews loses all its mystery. The mysteries disappear like the vapor of boiling water after cooling. Heated imagination

created them; when approached in a cold, scientific spirit they vanish like ghosts.

We have established the fact that not merely since Jehudah Halevi and Maimonides, but since the second century, the Jews have lived as an old civilized people; this is conclusively proved both by the history of Israel and Judaism till the second century and by the subsequent history of the Jews up to our own time. True, it makes no difference whether a people has behind it one or two millennia of civilized life. Its mental constitution does not undergo any significant changes during this timeless period, unless it happens to come into collision with an alien civilization. Just because the Jews in their long Ghetto career have come into contact with several alien civilizations, however, the longevity of Ghetto Judaism is of great scientific value. This fact enables us to make most interesting comparisons between the phenomena resulting from contact with various civilizations, and to draw from the experiences of the past objective inferences in regard to the future of Judaism in the orbit of Western civilization. If it is true, as Spengler avers, that the contact of Jews, as an old civilized people, with a foreign civilization took place for the first time in the sphere of European civilization, then our conclusions with respect to the future of Judaism cannot be so scientific as would have been the case had the conclusions been based on exactly analogous precedents. With this problem, however, we shall deal in the next chapter. Here we are concerned with the history of the Jews of the Ghetto, walled-off from the outside world.

Politically, the Ghetto Jews have been quite insignificant throughout all the eighteen centuries. The Ghetto has been tossed about like a cork on the waves of external



political life. The Jews have for all this long period lived by the sufferance of alien peoples. They have been passive objects in the hands of foreign conquerors. Persecutions and pogroms, expulsions and wanderings, interrupted by shorter or longer intervals of peace and prosperity, fill in monotonous succession the whole "political" history of the Ghetto Jews. How significant is the difference between the respective forms of political life in the times of Deborah, of Isaiah and of Herod, whereas in the last eighteen hundred years of Jewish political—or rather unpolitical—life nothing has happened that might have differentiated one century from another! The enemies have changed, but the Jews and their fate have remained the same. Whether the persecutors of the Jews and their protectors were respectively the Hellenist Syrians and the Romans, the Neo-Persians and the Arabs, the Crusaders and the Turks, the Germans and the Russians, it has made not much difference in Jewish history. It has been the fate of the Jews to wander from locality to locality looking for a resting-place and settling wherever conditions best suited them. So it was eighteen hundred years ago, and so it still is now. In order to avenge himself for the atrocities perpetrated against him, the Jew may even have assisted the enemies of his persecutors with arms in his hands, but apart from a desire to be left in peace he has never had real political ambitions of his own. Thus did he assist the Persians against the Byzantians; the Arabs against the Persians and the Visigoths; the Christians against the fanatic Moors, and so on till this day. To restore his own national sovereignty, however, the Ghetto Jew has never made a real attempt, excepting only the modern national movement, with which we shall deal later. His political ambitions for national restor-

ation have always been unreal, as befits an old civilized people. There have been dreams of a messianic future, but they could never be translated into the realities of the political world.

In short, the Ghetto Jews have during the last eighteen centuries been politically extinct. Those "political" events that did take place were caused by factors outside the Ghetto, and could have taken place at any time since the second century; they have been timeless. The illustrious Jewish statesmen whom we meet in Spain at the turn of the first millennium arose under alien influence, and they do not symbolize any definite period of Jewish history. Under similar conditions, Jewish statesmen of this type have always and everywhere arisen. In the next chapter this will be made clear.

We now turn to the internal life of the Ghetto Jews. First let us sketch briefly the social structure of the Ghetto. Since the second century, Jewish communal life has remained rigid and fixed for all time. The Ghetto has formed an *imperium in imperio*, a self-contained small state within the larger state. Jewish life has been regulated by the traditional Law as interpreted by the rabbis. The educational system and the Synagogue, the system of courts and philanthropic institutions, have remained essentially the same throughout the ages. The Ghetto Jew has always prayed and studied in the same way, celebrated the same festivals, observed the same laws of purity, diet, and so on. Scarcely any aspect of his life has escaped regulation by tradition. If a Jew defied Jewish authority he was excommunicated and banned from the "Jewish State." Whether in Palestine or in Syria, in Alexandria or imperial Rome, in Babylon or in Spain, in Turkey or in Germany, in Rumania or in Russia, the

Ghetto Jew shaped his existence on an almost invariable pattern. Parental and filial love, charitableness, respect for the Book and for the learned, devout and superstitious religiousness, are characteristics exhibited by Ghetto Jews of *all* lands and times. They are not peculiar to Jews only, but to all old civilized peoples. The Chinese or Indians, when isolated from alien influences, do not differ in this respect from Ghetto Jews.

Nor does the economic life of the Ghetto display any inward development. Lacking political power, Ghetto Jews have been unable to steer their own economic course. Economically, too, they have been dependent upon external factors. Consequently, the whole economic history of Ghetto Jews is a series of various forms of self-adaptation to the economic conditions of their environment. When the Jewish state was destroyed, the natural economic development of Israel had almost been completed. True, agriculture still formed the Jews' principal occupation, but manufacture, commerce, and banking had already reached a high stage of development. Agriculture itself was to a great extent commercialized and organized on capitalistic principles. There were many big landlords employing gangs of laborers and producing agricultural articles for profitable export.

That the Jews in Babylon had as early as the sixth century B. C. E. been engaged much more in commerce and handicraft than in agriculture, is due to the fact that the *progressive city population* of Judea was exiled to that country, and not the "people of the land." It was only natural that the exiled to Babylon should have turned to occupations which suited the stage of economic development they had attained. "In southern Europe, especially in Sicily and the south of France in the first thousand

years of the Christian era, there were still traces of a Jewish agriculture (many plantations of mulberry trees for the culture of silk worms and vineyards), but commerce was already the main occupation. In Central and in Eastern Europe, where after the Crusades the Jews settled in considerable numbers, commerce, money business, and, somewhat later, handicraft, became their sole occupations" (Dr. Ruppin, *Jews in the Modern World*).

The inert masses of the people of Fellaheen that remained on the soil of their own country were engaged in primitive agriculture and handicrafts, "living from hand to mouth and patiently enduring." So have lived the overwhelming majority of the Chinese and Indians, the Armenians and Arabs, and so, too, would most of the Jews have lived had they likewise remained in their own country. Divorced from the soil, however, the Jews, like all other old civilized peoples, have on the hedonistic principle turned to whatever available occupation appeared easiest, most suitable, and most profitable (Dr. Ruppin, *ibid.*). This tendency, however, is not based on the hedonistic principle only. It is inherent in all old civilized peoples and based strictly on the fact that the agriculturalist, attached to the soil, is backward, and as such either averse to emigration or, when forced to emigrate, easily able to assimilate himself to other primitive peoples and thus lose his national identity. Only the *advanced* section of old civilized peoples ventures to emigrate, and its contact with primitive peoples does not impair its national consciousness. That this advanced section of old civilized peoples should prefer commerce, banking, and handicraft to any kind of primitive labor, is a matter of course. It has been proved that in Northern Africa, in pre-Islamic times, great numbers of Jews were engaged



in agriculture; their disappearance was no doubt due to their absorption by the native population. Who knows how many Jews of the lower classes have thus vanished? Those who survived (i. e., the self-conscious and advanced Jews) have turned to the same occupations as the Chinese in California, Indians in East Africa, or Englishmen and Americans in the whole world of today. Among backward peoples, the Jews have always represented the vanguard of advanced economic systems, and have thus played an important role in the economic development of master nations. For this reason they have often been invited by kings or other potentates to settle in their dominions, and their lives and property have been safeguarded by special measures. Among *advanced* peoples, however, the Jews have always been uncomfortable competitors in all those free occupations such as commerce and banking, which require a greater intellectual capacity, acquired only at a later stage of cultural development. Modern anti-Semitism springs from this economic conflict, and it arises as soon as the master nation is advanced enough to aspire to the economic positions occupied by the "aliens." The commercial spirit of the Jews is despised and condemned because the native population already possesses sufficient of it to be able to dispense with the Jews and to take over their occupations. All modern anti-Semitic theories are, in the main, rationalizations of this natural desire to get rid of the competitor. With this modern anti-Semitism we shall have to deal again later on, as it has always appeared when the old civilized Jews clashed with culturally advanced peoples. We have here still to point out the fact that whenever opportunities for commercial activities have been restricted either by persecutions and over-population of

the Ghetto or by other factors, the Jews have always fallen back on primitive handicrafts, "living from hand to mouth and patiently enduring." That is why handicrafts appear only later among the chief occupations of the Ghetto Jews. The Jews are primarily a people of traders, moneylenders, and intellectual professionals. When their numbers were small and the backward master nations among whom they lived left them in peace, they thrived and grew rich. When, however, their numbers increased and severe restrictions were imposed upon them, the life of the Ghetto masses became comparable to the life of coolies. They reared big families and resigned themselves to their fate, praying and dreaming of a blissful messianic future. The shoemaker, tailor, cab-driver, pedlar, matchmaker, and other Ghetto toilers could hardly keep body and soul together. It is only natural that these masses of Ghetto proletarians have been the first to believe and to follow pretenders to messiahdom, the saviours of their dreams.

This description covers the whole economic history of the Ghetto Jews for the last eighteen centuries. And now we shall deal with the *spiritual* aspect of Ghetto life and see how all historical facts fit completely into our picture of Israel's life-course.

For the sake of lucidity we shall consider separately the three chief spiritual tendencies of Ghetto life, although in practice they are generally inseparable. *Rabbinism*, *Rational Mysticism*, and *Messianism* are the three currents characteristic of Ghetto Judaism. All these originated in the remote past of Israel's civilization, before it was transformed into a religion of Fellaheen.

The amoraim, saboraim, geonim, tosaphists, the authors of responsa, commentaries, and codices, and lastly,

the rabbis of today are direct successors of the scribes and the tannaim of post-exilic Israel and the legitimate representatives of *rabbinism*. Throughout the ages of Israel's civilized existence, these intellectual leaders of Ghetto Judaism have been brooding over the traditional books of the Law and piling up in endless succession commentary upon commentary, annotation upon annotation. With uncanny dexterity and hair-splitting casuistry they have discussed every word, letter, and tittle of the traditional Law no matter whether it had any relevance to actual life or not. The laws relating to sacrifices have been discussed as seriously, and in as minute detail, as though the existence of Judaism depended upon them. The rabbinic literature which has thus come into existence is immense, and it testifies to the tremendous erudition and the great intellectual capacity of the Jewish Brahmins. These rabbis do not, however, represent a new type, and they have not produced anything essentially new. The great tannaim such as Hillel, Akiba, or Jehudah Hanassi, who lived in or before the second century, fully anticipated every fundamental of the whole edifice of rabbinic Ghetto Judaism. Many of the Ghetto rabbis have been of very high moral standard and admirable teachers of social conduct, but so had been the authors of Proverbs, Jesus ben Sira, and the early tannaim.

The speculative methods of interpretation may have become more casuistic and involved, but surely *pilpulism*—this scholastic casuistry—does not signify a higher stage of development. Moreover, whether the Yeshivah, the Jewish religious college, was in a Palestinian or Babylonian, Egyptian or Spanish, German or Russian Ghetto, or whether the rabbis lived in the third or fourth, ninth or twelfth, seventeenth or twentieth centuries, the same

method has been applied and the same matter been the subject of discussion. The rabbinistic productiveness, like everything else, has been timeless.

Next comes the Rationalistic Mysticism, or, as it is called in Hebrew, the *Kabalah*. We possess a very rich kabalistic literature, to which Jewish mystics of all ages and lands have contributed—without, however, having introduced into it any essentially new elements. The description of the apocalyptic literature given in Chapter IV applies as well to the kabalistic literature of subsequent Jewish rationalistic mysticism. The authors of the apocalyptic books, such as Daniel, Enoch, IV Esdras, Jubilees, John's Revelation, have been of the same mentality as their spiritual heirs in all later ages, as exemplified by the authors of the kabalistic works *Book of Creation* (*Sefer Yetzirah*), *Book of Brightness* (*Zohar*), and their numerous interpreters. Also, rabbinic literature contains much of the kabalistic tradition. It is a documented fact that since the time of Daniel the flow of Jewish rationalistic mysticism has scarcely once suffered an interruption.

The fantastic worlds imagined by the kabalists have usually been more elaborate, and the methods employed more hair-splitting, but qualitatively this implies a deterioration from, rather than an improvement upon, the works of the original apocalyptists. The apocalyptists and the kabalists bear the same relationship to each other as the tannaim and the more casuistic Ghetto rabbis. God now appears surrounded by more numerous and more mystic beings endowed with more fanciful names; the contemplation of God and the understanding of heavenly secrets now require a greater skill in juggling with symbols and the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; the visions of a messianic future are embellished with more fantastic



details; the advent of the Kingdom of God is repeatedly determined by more complex and more mysterious calculations. But all this does not connote a higher stage of development. Moreover, as from among the apocalyptists in the days before the second century, so also from among the kabalists of the last eighteen centuries, spurious Messiahs, swindlers, and impostors have arisen, roving among Ghetto Jews and exciting the fantasy of suffering, superstitious masses with the expectation of an imminent advent of the Kingdom of Heaven, terrible pictures of purgatory and hell, and other similar scares. Incidentally, charms have been distributed and talismans offered for sale.

In this fashion has the spiritual activity of the early scribes of all types been continued throughout every age of Judaism's existence. The works of the past have been repeatedly rewritten, the result of which has been no more than an *extension*, and in many respects a distortion, of old ideas and methods. No essentially new ideas have been conceived.

This historical truth holds good, too, in the case of the popular movements of *Messianism*. This third tendency of spiritual Ghetto-life likewise originated in Israel's civilization before the second century, and from then on it produced no new ideas. On every occasion when the conditions that produced early Christianity have recurred in the life of Ghetto Jews as an old civilized people, movements similar to those of the original second religiousness have arisen. The ignorant and superstitious masses of the Ghetto (significantly called by the learned Ame Haaretz—the "people of the land"), have readily responded to the calls of revivalist preachers and messianic visionaries. The spark of the messianic hope,

burning in their souls, has easily been fanned into a revivalist conflagration. Anyone knowing how to appeal to their emotions with promises of imminent salvation has always been able to find a faithful following of devotees.

The mystic kabalists, like the early apocalyptists, were of the city intelligentsia that had become tired of the dry study of the law and hankered for a mystical understanding of Life and an intimate intercourse with the Unknown. They were the creators of the Kabbalah, the Jewish mystic theosophy. *Messianic* movements, too, have sprung from a similar urge. These, however, were movements not of the educated but of *Ame Haaretz*, the people of the land. The people of the land were followers of the preachers of the original second religiousness, including Jesus, whereas the apocalyptists were recruited from among those of the educated who were discontented with mere study of the cold, Pharisaic law. In spite of this essential difference between the rationalistic syncretism of the sated intellectuals and the popular syncretistic movements of the naive folk, there has always existed between the two an intimate interaction. Just as the preachers of the original second religiousness had been influenced by the apocalyptic literature, so were the preachers of the younger movements of the second religiousness influenced by the Kabbalah.

The final fate of all popular religious revivalist movements has always been the same. After a brief period of great religious enthusiasm and revivalist frenzy, the movements fizzle out and are eventually transformed into rigid organizations. This was the fate not only of early Christianity, but of all messianic movements within Judaism during the last eighteen hundred years.

Intellectual hypertrophy and degeneration of rational-

ism on the one hand, and the economic destitution of the naive folk and the ignorance of the superstitious masses of the *Ame Haaretz* on the other, formed the natural background of all these secondary religious movements, irrespective of time or country. We hear of messianic movements among the Ghetto Jews of Palestine, Persia, Spain, Turkey, Germany, Poland, and Russia, and the fundamental characteristics exhibited have everywhere been almost identical. Everywhere and always they have sprung from the hunger of the naive folk for an intimate communion with the Supernatural and from a naive faith in the messianic future. True, the preachers or Messiah pretenders have not been of the same character. They differed from each other in many essential respects; but no matter what the personal qualities of the preachers, the general character of the *movement* has always been determined by the spirit of the naive folk who followed them. And the spirit that has driven the masses of Ghetto Jews of all lands and times into the arms of revivalist preachers has been the spirit of the second religiousness. Whether the preachers or Messiah pretenders were students of the Kabbalah, preachers of Jesus' type, or even impostors, the religious enthusiasm of the masses and their blind faith in the superhuman qualities of the saviour were invariably almost identical both in origin and in character. We have seen that even in the time of early Christianity there were, besides Jesus, many other preachers of the second religiousness, differing from Jesus in various respects, though all the movements they had founded were of the same inner character. Consequently, the popular syncretism of the last eighteen centuries of Jewish history has not in this respect either, displayed any novel features. The Jewish masses who fol-

lowed Abu ibn Obadiah of Ispahan, Yudghan of Hamadan, Reubeni and Molcho, Sabbatai Zevi, Jacob Frank, Baalshem, and others of that type, were of the same mental make-up, and it was a mystic urge of an almost identical character that drove them into the arms of these diverse prophets, preachers, Messiah pretenders, and impostors.

Baalshem, who in the eighteenth century gave rise to the Hassidic movement, most nearly resembled the founder of Christianity. Like Jesus, he wandered among the simple Ghetto Jewish folk, preaching, healing, and performing miracles. The enthusiastic followers of both Jesus and Baalshem were persecuted by the Pharisees of their respective times, and the fate of both movements, the Jewish Christianity and Hassidism, was analogous. Superhuman powers were attributed to the founders of both these religious movements, and similar legends were woven round them. Soon after the deaths of both Jesus and Baalshem, their religious movements were transformed into sects with fixed and rigid forms of worship. As we have seen, Spengler admits the morphological similarity between Jesus and Baalshem and between primitive Christianity and Hassidism, but in the light of his conception of Judaism this analogy is inexplicable. How could an old civilization, long after it had been transformed into a religion of Fellaheen, produce a religious movement that by its inner character and in almost all details of its fate was analogous to a movement which is held to have signalized the awakening of a culture? In the history of no civilization has this happened. In the light of *our* conception of Israel's history, however, this contradiction does not arise at all. We have found that the rise of Christianity did not signalize the awakening



of a culture, but that it was rather one of the movements of Israel's second religiousness. Thus, being one of the expressions of a later civilization, it could well have arisen again and again like all other spiritual tendencies of civilized life. The Jews, in their career as an old civilized people, could not have reproduced the works of the early or late culture, like those of the bards and minstrels, or of the prophets and the great novelists, but they could and did reproduce the works of their *civilization*, such as those of the scribes and apocalyptists. Similarly, the religious movements characteristic of Israel's late civilizations could and did arise among the old civilized Ghetto Jews. Baalshem and his movement happened to resemble Jesus and Christianity. The preachers of other messianic movements on the part of Ghetto Jews were different from Jesus, but Jesus, as we have seen, was not the only representative of Israel's original second religiousness. These revivalists resembled the other Messiah pretenders or preachers whom Judaism had produced in such abundance at and about Jesus' time.

These three tendencies—Rabbinism, Kabbalah, and Messianism—running through the history of the Ghetto Jews make up the totality of Jewish spiritual life since Israel's embarkation on its career as a people of Fellaheen. In order to give a more lucid characterization of these spiritual currents, we were compelled to resort to the method of abstraction. In real life none of them appeared in pure form as described here. They flowed into one another, and very often one person represented all three of them.

As early as the second century Rabbi Akiba had combined in himself all three spiritual tendencies. He was the most eminent rabbinic teacher of his time; he indulged in rationalistic mysticism, and preached the Messiahship of

Bar Kochba. Since his time there have been many other Jewish personalities of similar mentality. Many prominent talmudic scholars (among whom we find the author of the *Shulhan Arukh*) have been carried away by the enthusiasm of the second religiousness of their time and have greatly contributed to the Jewish theosophy. However, in extreme cases sources of friction have arisen among the various tendencies. In particular, Rabbinism and popular syncretism have often clashed, and a bitter struggle has broken out between them. The old animosity and sharp controversy between the doctrinaire Pharisees and the syncretistic preachers of the original second religiousness have recurred several times during the eighteen centuries of Ghetto life. This bitter antagonism has always sprung from the same source, and its character has been determined by factors analogous to those which determined the character of the famous controversy between the Pharisees and Jesus.

There was yet another reason for the abstract nature of our description of the spiritual life of the Ghetto Jews. We have purposely disregarded alien influences on Jewish life, whereas in reality the Ghetto Jews have never lived in an air-tight vacuum. The ideas and concepts of their environment have trickled through even at times when the segregation of Jews was strictly carried out. Nevertheless, it was expedient for the sake of lucidity to isolate the Ghetto from its environment. In the next chapter the deficiency caused by this abstraction will be made good. Here let us only point out that *all* three spiritual currents of the Ghetto have to a greater or less extent been influenced by external forces. Thus, the apocalyptic literature and the messianic movements of the East adopted certain elements of the Persian and

Arabian religious worlds, whereas in the West certain of the Christian ideas and concepts found entry into the religious world of Ghetto Jews. Even the idea of the Trinity, though more or less modified and disguised, was adopted by some of the Jewish mystics. This syncretistic trait, however, is characteristic of the literary as well as of the popular mysticism of all civilizations. While dealing with Christianity we have fully discussed this trend, and all that was said there applies to the movements and the literary tendencies analogous to Christianity and to the rationalistic mysticism of the apocalyptists.

But even the talmudic studies have been influenced by alien spiritual currents. In curriculum, and in the methods adopted, this influence has sometimes been very strong. The various attempts at a systematic codification of the traditional Law, the rationalization of Jewish doctrines, the philosophical exposition of the principles of Judaism, and so on, have to a great extent been due to the spiritual influence of the environment. This is proved by the fact that the more intimate the contact of the Jews with an alien civilization, the greater was their activity in these directions.

Thus we come to the problem of the relationship between Judaism and alien civilizations, and to this we shall devote the next chapter.

## XII. JUDAISM AND ALIEN CIVILIZATIONS

We have traveled with Israel on its long journey through all the stages of development and observed its natural growth until the people became very old. We have, however, purposely overlooked the accidents that have overtaken Israel on this journey and pretended to ignore such happenings as have resulted from collisions of Judaism with alien civilizations. The impact of alien civilizations upon Judaism has, however, been responsible for events and phenomena in Jewish life so interesting and so important that we must devote special attention to it.

In our discussion of Spengler's historical pseudomorphosis we considered events resulting from an impact of an old civilization upon a young culture. Here we are concerned with events resulting from a contact between two civilizations, the one being young, still in process of formation, and the other old, already set and fixed.

According to Spengler, the intrusion of the "old" into the life of "young" peoples results in the disintegration and destruction both of the "old" and of the "young" civilization. The carpers and critics among the old, intellectually superior people, poison the political, economic, and spiritual life of the younger people and disrupt their social structure. Simultaneously, the intellectuals among the Fellaheen, "enlightened" by the alien civilization, look down contemptuously upon the traditional forms of life even of their own people. The cynical



criticism of the Jewish or Indian intellectuals, enlightened by European civilization, is directed not only against the traditional institutions and convictions of the Western peoples, but against those of their own race also.

These ideas of Spengler regarding the relationship between old and young civilizations seem to imply a justification of anti-Semitism. Since people of Fellaheen constitute a disruptive force among peoples of young alien civilizations, the menaced nations are justified in resisting their influence. Civilized life is the result of a long, painful process of inhibitions and sublimations of primitive instincts and impulses. It is therefore natural that a nation still swayed by instincts, one whose forms of life are to a great extent determined by subconscious forces, should abhor the activities of the "old," superior intelligence.

If we ignore certain utterances based on anti-Semitic prejudice, and remove the stings from his exposition Spengler's analysis of the relationship between a people of Fellaheen and a young civilization is in a large measure correct. It is true that the alien intelligence contributes to the disintegration of the traditional life of peoples of young civilization. From the point of view, too, of one who glorifies culture in contradistinction to civilization, the conclusions which Spengler draws from this analysis are plausible. From the point of view of a civilized cosmopolitan, however, these conclusions are reactionary in the extreme and without historical justification. Spengler's own historical conception invalidates them. Does not Spengler himself contend that all traditional institutions and forms of life are predestined to disintegrate and to wither away? Does not the *Decline of the West* mean

the inescapable death in which all cultures find their fateful end? Consequently, Spengler himself makes pointless the accusations which he levels against people of Fellaheen.

From a world-historical perspective, does it really matter whether traditional forms of life disintegrate a century earlier or later? As they are inevitably fated to die out, the intrusion of old peoples can only mean the speeding up of an inherent development that is in any case unavoidable. The reactionary romantic may find justification in resisting this accelerating influence. A cosmopolitan rationalist, however, welcomes and supports it.

There is another reason, though, why Spengler finds the influence of old peoples on young civilizations injurious. He thinks that this influence is detrimental not only because of the age-difference, but also because of the cultural incompatibility that exists between them. The aliens, by reason of their foreign mentality, misunderstand the struggles of the peoples among whom they live.

Their contributions to the science, art, and literature of other nations are on this account harmful also. Needless to say, this accusation cannot be sustained either. Advanced civilizations are cosmopolitan in character, timeless and homeless. Intelligence fully developed in advanced civilizations is, in contradistinction to racial instincts, sub-conscious impulses and emotions, common to humanity in general. Its products are transferable to all lands and translatable into all tongues. The subject-matter with which it deals may be of national character, but in itself it is un-national and un-racial. Thus, intelligence developed in one civilization may easily be

adapted to the problems and interests of another. Intellectuals of an "old" nation living in the sphere of an alien civilization soon become indistinguishable from the native intellectuals. True, it takes time before the peculiar manners and habits of thought formed in the course of their natural history are repressed and disappear altogether. But in a few generations the assimilation is so far advanced that not a vestige of a difference between the "alien" and native population is left. Provided they are granted peace and freedom of development, the "aliens" identify themselves completely with peoples among whom they live; take an active part in their political, economic, and social struggles; produce in the vernacular works of science, art, and literature; and eventually lose their national identity altogether. Subconsciously, they may introduce some alien spiritual elements into the general life of their adopted civilization. These racial elements, however, are of no significance, because in the world of advanced civilizations it is not race or religion but *intelligence* that determines the value of spiritual works, and not instincts but *economic interests* that provide the driving forces of all social and political struggles. In this irreligious and utilitarian world, racial origin of ideas, theories, and so forth is of no consequence. The more civilized a nation is, the more insignificant are the factors of nationality and race. This is, in fact, one of the most important implications of the historical morphology of Spengler himself. Applying it to the problem of Jews living in the sphere of Western civilization, Spengler predicts the complete disappearance of Israel from the Americo-European world. He points out that in the upper social strata of the cosmopolis, the old social distinctions no longer exist. They vanish be-

cause in cosmopolitan life race has completely lost its significance. As soon as the life of master nations becomes fully civilized, distinction between "old" and "young" will vanish. And thus the Jews will inevitably lose their identity and disappear.

Before we deal with the contemporary problems of Judaism and are in a position to test the validity of Spengler's forecast of the future of Western Jews, we must discover what was the fate of Jews who lived in the orbit of past civilizations and compare their fate with that of contemporary Jews. This comparison is exceedingly illuminating and will enable us to make more reliable inferences with regard to the destiny of the Jews of today.

First let us sketch in *rough* outlines the tendencies exhibited in Jewish life under the influence of the three best known alien civilizations—the Hellenistic, the Arabian, and the contemporary European. The Hellenistic civilization has already engaged our attention in connection with our study of the political, economic, and spiritual movements within Judaism, prior to its transformation into Ghetto-Judaism. Here we shall deal again with the Jews living under the influence of Hellenism in such fashion as to make our conclusions in regard to the effects produced on Judaism by alien civilizations more comprehensive and convincing.

The analogy between external manifestations of Jewish life in the spheres of Hellenistic and Arabian as well as of Western civilization is most striking. Bible translation is one of them. The Greek translation—the Septuagint—the Arabic rendition of Saadia Gaon, and Mendelssohn's German translation, manifest a tendency of identical character. They may be regarded, symbolically speaking,



as spiritual bridges over which the Jews crossed the gulf that had divided them from their cultural environment. They have always, in fact, been followed by a very intensive intellectual activity of Jews in the respective vernaculars. The literary productions of Alexandrian Jews in Greek were of an exactly analogous character to those of the Arabian Jews in Arabic and of the Western Jews in German and other European languages. Assimilation soon appeared in the light of an inherently necessary mass phenomenon. The Hellenist, as well as the Arabian and Western Jews, abandoned Jewish forms of life, repressed their racial peculiarities, and adopted the language and names, the habits and manners, the ideas and the concepts of their respective foreign environments. In each of the three periods of assimilation Jews distinguished themselves for their superior intellectual capacity. They quickly assimilated the acquirements of the alien civilizations, and in many respects outstripped the master nations. In science, art, philosophy, and politics they played as important a role as in commerce and finance. In Alexandria and Cordova and in Berlin we find not only important merchants and financiers, but also great doctors, philosophers, poets, and statesmen. In the spheres of all three civilizations mentioned there were abundant Rothschilds and Warburgs, Disraelis and Rathenaus, Heines and Mendelssohns, Ehrlichs and Freuds, Hertzes and Einsteins. The difference to be found among Disraeli, British Prime Minister, Samuel, Vizier of the King of Granada, and Tiberius Alexander, Roman Governor General of Egypt, or among Mendelssohn, Philo, and Maimonides, is determined chiefly by the different characters of the respective *alien* civilizations in the orbits

of which they lived. In *Jewish* history there is no difference among them and their significance is morphologically identical.

An intimate inter-relation and inter-action between Jews and primitive peoples have naturally been impossible. The lives of savage races have exercised no attraction for Jews who had long ago gone through the corresponding periods of primitive and cultural life and become a civilized people or a people of Fellaheen. There could have been no intimate contact between civilized Jews, on the one hand, and the uncivilized Greeks, pre-Mohammedan Arabs, or the Western peoples of the Middle Ages on the other. Only when the life of the environment began to be civilized, and the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia of master nations lifted their heads and proclaimed the revolutionary ideas of Liberalism and Democracy, did the walls of the Ghetto crumble and the Jews begin to emigrate into the new alien world. Thus was the process of assimilation set in motion.

The process of Jewish assimilation may be divided into three phases, in conformity with the three periods into which Spengler divides all civilizations. The effects produced on Jewish life by the classical, Arabian, and Western civilizations in their periods of *democracy* were different from those which these produced in their next period, that of *The Formation of Caesarism*, or in their last one, that of *The Maturing of Final Forms*.

In the first phase of assimilation, the intellectual life of the Jews was stirred and great works of Jewish literature were produced. This intensive intellectual activity is commonly regarded as having been a revival of Jewish spiritual life. Actually, the modern works of Jewish literature are but a synthesis between Judaism and an alien

civilization, a synthesis the alien elements of which grow in strength and importance at the expense of specifically Jewish elements, until eventually the literary works of Jewish authors, even when they deal with purely *Jewish* subjects and are written in *Hebrew*, have inwardly little to do with Judaism. In fact, it is impossible to determine which works of Jewish philosophers, scientists, and poets should be classified as Jewish. Is a philosopher or poet of Jewish descent, writing in Greek, Arabic, or German, on subjects of Jewish interest, to be classed as Jewish? Or are works written in *Hebrew*, the contents, style, and form of which are, however, of the same origin and character as those of Greek, Arabian, and German poets, novelists, and philosophers, really Hebrew? Do, for instance, the Hebrew poems on wine, women, and friendship of the poets of the Arabian period, such as Ibn Gabirol, Moses ibn Ezra, and Jehudah Halevi, or those of the present period such as Bialik, Tschernichovsky, and Schneur, belong to Hebrew literature or to the Arabian and European literatures respectively? What have they in common with Israel's original cultural character? Where is the criterion whereby to judge the nationality of a literary work? Is it the language or the style, the contents or the poetical form? The truth of the matter is that in the period of assimilation works of philosophy, science, and even poetry are more and more products of intellectual labor and, as such, more and more abstract and transferable. Bialik himself admitted that he was only a "hewer of wood in the temple of Hebrew literature," and Ibn Gabirol, who in four hundred verses gave "poetic" form to the rules of Hebrew grammar and wrote a "poem" in which he versified all the six hundred and thirteen commandments, was surely not better than

Bialik. Imagine an Amos versifying Hebrew grammar or the Jewish commandments! The language of poets belonging to cultural epochs is inseparable from their works, but language is now no longer a criterion whereby to judge the origin and character of literary productions. They may be written in any language and translated into any other without its making much difference. The Jewish spiritual celebrities of all three periods of assimilation wrote either in Hebrew or in the vernacular, but more often in the latter. The chief theological and historical works of the Hellenist and Arabian periods as well as of the contemporary one, were written in their respective vernaculars. Philo and Josephus wrote in Greek, Jehudah Halevi's *Khuzari* and Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* were written in Arabic; while Mendelssohn, Zunz, Geiger, Graetz, and the rest wrote in German.

The same applies to the *political* awakening of Jews living in the orbit of a progressive alien civilization.

The rising bourgeoisie and intelligentsia of all civilizations conceive, as we have seen, the idea of Nation, and in the name of Nation the Third Estate struggles against the nobility and priesthood, whose privileges are sanctioned by tradition. Liberalism and Democracy arise during this struggle for power. The Jews, the new immigrants into this world of pulsating life and historical battles, associate themselves naturally with the progressive forces of freedom and democracy, and thus arouse the hostility of the conservatives. In this period of ascendancy of the Third Estate, the process of Jewish assimilation is the smoothest. Attempts are made at the reconciliation of Judaism with modern ideas, and these are



accompanied by strong movements aiming at the reformation of Jewish religious service and ritual.

When, however, the Third Estate of the master nations is firmly established in government, Liberalism and Democracy are discarded as uncomfortable restrictions of money power. The bourgeoisie is then allied with the primitive estates against the young proletariat and the rule of Reaction ensues. The enlightened nationalism of the young revolutionary bourgeoisie is superseded by a rampant nationalistic Chauvinism, rationalizing the reactionary and imperialistic tendencies of the ruling money power and allied with the army, aristocracy, and church. Now the Jew is a scapegoat for everybody; to the upper bourgeoisie he is the revolutionary; to the petite bourgeoisie, and especially to its young generation that envies and covets his position, he is an alien parasite; to the proletariat he is the exploiting speculator. This hatred of the Jew, rationalized by diverse pseudo-scientific and fantastic theories and ideologies, gives rise to the modern Jewish nationalism. The economic and political insecurity of the Jews brings about the "rebirth" of the Jewish nation. This modern Jewish nationalism, however, is Jewish only in name. In character and in forms of expression it does not differ from the nationalistic movements of master nations. In its first stages it is still to a great extent Jewish. It then becomes impregnated with the spirit of Ghetto Messianism, undergoing a rapid process of modernization. The romantic dreams of a messianic future, cherished by Ghetto Jews, are modernized by enlightened Jewish nationalists, stirred by the revolutionary national ideas originating in the world outside the Ghetto. Soon, however, the process of assimilation has advanced

so far that this modern Jewish nationalism no longer exhibits any Jewish characteristic whatever, excepting in externals. If it had not been for modern anti-Semitism, it would never have come into existence; the romantic Jewish nationalism of the first phase would simply have died a natural death.

In the chaotic conditions and social convulsions attending the transformation of civilized nations into peoples of Fellaheen, the fate of the Jews living in the midst of those nations has been uncertain. No doubt they participated in the social revolutions and mystic movements of the second religiousness and, together with the native population, fell victims to those same social and religious upheavals. We know, also, that many were either converted by force or slaughtered, and that those who escaped found their way back to the old Jewish refuge—the Ghetto. The conditions, however, were too chaotic for us to be able to get any idea how many had already been completely assimilated and how many were converted by force; how many were massacred and how many escaped into the Ghetto. The only indisputable facts are that the great majority of Jews living in the orbit of alien civilizations eventually disappeared altogether, and that the revival of Jewish spirit and literature terminated in complete decay. Thus the “Jewish Renaissance,” the revival of Jewish spirit, was the result of the impact of an alien civilization, in the *first* period of its development, on the life of Jews living within its orbit. It manifested itself in a great intellectual activity and filled the first phase of Jewish assimilation. With the decay of democracy and rationalism in master nations, and the subsequent chaos of economic, social, and political conditions, giving rise to Caesarism and force poli-

tics, the *second* phase in the process of Jewish assimilation began. Jewish intellectual life decayed in sympathy with the general intellectual degeneration; modern anti-Semitism checked the process of assimilation, far advanced though it was already, and strengthened Jewish consciousness and solidarity. In the *third* phase, with the transformation of master nations into peoples of Fellaheen, the fate of the Jews became obscure. The majority had already been absorbed into the native population or slaughtered, and the rest remained in the Ghetto or were thrust back into it.

So much for our description of the fate of the Jews living in the orbits of alien civilizations in general; and now we have to prove, by the actual history of each of these three periods of Jewish assimilation, that it covers the phenomena and events observable in the life of Jews living in the spheres of classical and Arabian, as well as of contemporary, Western civilization.

First, let us consider the Hellenistic period. This period differed from the two other periods of assimilation in that the Jews did not enter the alien world of Hellenism as Ghetto Jews, but as sons of a nation the civilization of which was still in process of formation. While Jews in the Hellenistic world outside Palestine went through a natural process of assimilation, the Jews within Palestine still lived a full national existence, producing forms of life and going through economic, political, and spiritual development that was, as we have seen, analogous in almost every detail to that of any other nation in the corresponding period of its life-course. True, Hellenism penetrated also into Palestine, and its influence there was very great, but the national life of Palestinian Jews was still pulsating and steering its own course. *Outside Pales-*

tine, the Jews, advanced in Jewish civilization and divorced from the economic and political life of their nation, were exposed to complete assimilation, though events *in* Palestine none the less exercised a great influence upon them.

Now the process of assimilation of Jews in the Hellenist world was analogous to that of Jews both in the Islamic and in the Americo-European world, although the Jews entering the Hellenistic world were not yet Ghetto Jews. We have found that the spiritual life of the Ghetto is not much different from that of the period of advanced civilization. The mentality of civilized Jews of the Hellenistic period was already inwardly akin to that of Ghetto Jews. Consequently, both responded in similar fashion to the stimuli of alien civilizations.

The first phase of Hellenistic assimilation was characterized by a flourishing Jewish Hellenistic literature. Attempts were made to reconcile Judaism with Hellenism. This tendency culminated in the works of the great philosopher Philo. In the meantime, however, the masses became more and more Hellenized. They spoke Greek and adopted the manners, habits, and customs of the Hellenists, and their association with Judaism manifested itself almost solely in the reformed religious service in a modern synagogue. They lived at first in separate quarters, but gradually, with their economic advance, they moved out and intermixed with other sections of the Hellenist population.

This happened in the period of Greek "liberalism" and "democracy" following Alexander the Great. But the Jews of Alexandria were stirred up not only by *Greek* ideas of freedom, but also by the analogous ideas of the Jewish democrats who brought about the Maccabean



uprising, that belated Jewish bourgeoisie revolution. The immediate proximity of Palestine effected an intimate relationship between Jewish Palestine and the Jews in Egypt. Many books of the Apocrypha, and even of the Bible, may have been written in one or the other country. Some scientists maintain that even the book of Ecclesiastes was written in Alexandria.

In the Arabian period of assimilation, it was the revolutionary ideas of an *alien* bourgeoisie that stirred up the Jews and gave rise to their spiritual revival. Under the influence of these ideas the Jews turned their backs on Ghetto Judaism based on the Talmud and devoted themselves to the study of the Bible and the Hebrew language. In the *Hellenistic* period, however, when the Jews were not yet transformed into Ghetto Jews and the Talmud did not yet exist—even the Bible was still not completely codified—a revolt against the Talmud and return to the Bible and its language were impossible. Moreover, the spoken national language of the Jews at that time was Aramaic and not Hebrew. In other respects, however, the spiritual activity and social tendencies exhibited by Jews in the sphere of the Hellenistic civilization were of the same origin, spirit, and character as those of Jews in the Arabian and Western worlds.

When in the *second* phase of Hellenism reactionary forces broke through, manifesting themselves also in anti-Semitism of the modern type, the reaction of Hellenist Jews to these changed conditions was of a character analogous to that of the reaction of Islamic and European Jews in the corresponding phase of their assimilation. Most of the Jews were already almost completely Hellenized; but under the pressure of reaction and the attendant modern anti-Semitism, their national conscious-

ness became aroused and intensified. When, for example, in the year 38 c. e. Agrippa I, a descendant of the Hasmonean family, passed through Alexandria, he was acclaimed by the Alexandrian Jews with great national enthusiasm, and an anti-Semitic outbreak then took place. The Jewish quarters were invaded and many of their residents slaughtered; the synagogues were demolished or desecrated, shops and houses looted, the Jewish religion publicly derided. This was not an outbreak of primitive anti-Semitism like that in the days of the Crusades; it was a normal expression of *modern* anti-Semitism comparable to that of the Nazis. Long before the appearance of Agrippa, the Greeks, envious of the economic prosperity and literary successes of the Jews, had spread anti-Semitic ideas and fantastically misinterpreted Jewish religion and history. A literary feud and ruthless economic competition between Greeks and Jews had been going on for some time, resulting in modern anti-Semitism on the one hand, and in a strengthening of national consciousness of the Hellenized Jews on the other. The chief leader of the anti-Semites at the time of the outbreak was Appion, that prototype of all modern anti-Semites. The efforts of Jewish apologists of that time, such as Philo and Josephus, were as futile as those of Jewish apologists today. The root-causes of modern anti-Semitism were economic, and no literary controversy can change it. Thus, anti-Semitism in the Hellenistic world continued to spread and gather strength, and concurrently the national consciousness of the Jews grew stronger and stronger. When conditions became intolerable, the Jews in the Hellenistic world revolted against the Hellenists and put thousands upon thousands of them to death. For a time the Jews of Egypt, number-

ing about a million souls, had the upper hand. But the Hellenized Egyptians and Greeks, supported by Romans, succeeded after much bloodshed in quelling the insurrection. This was the character of all Jewish insurrections of that period, which Spengler regards as revolts of a people of a newly awakened Magian culture against the menacing Hellenistic pseudomorphosis. He looks upon the slaughtered Hellenist merchants as victims of Jewish "anti-Semitism." The Jews, supposed to have been at that time a very young people, rose up against the Hellenists, who by reason of their intellectual superiority exploited them. That this theory has no historical foundation must by now be self-evident. The uprising of the Jews was a reaction against the Hellenists' modern anti-Semitism, the chief root-cause of which was the competition of two civilized peoples in the field of commerce and finance and in all the intellectual professions. The argument that in Galilee there still existed primitive peasants and fishermen is invalid, for naive peasants and fishermen are to be found in every country, even the most highly civilized. They survive all civilizations, as Spengler himself points out; but side by side with those peasants and fishermen of Galilee there were in the whole Hellenistic world, including Palestine, Jewish merchants and bankers, famous doctors of law, philosophers, poets, statesmen, and other Jewish representatives of high intelligence.

And as the Jewish reaction against modern assimilation is mainly political in character, and has nothing to do with Israel's culture, so was it also in the Hellenistic period. Similarly, as the modern Jewish *nationalists* of today are actually *de-nationalized*, so were the *nationalists* among Jews in the Hellenistic world *de-nationalized*.

There is no doubt that without anti-Semitic pressure the national revival in either period would not have taken place, but that the assimilated Jews would have peacefully lost their national entity and disappeared as Jews altogether.

In the two later periods of assimilation—the Arabian and the Western—the “spiritual revival” of the Jews was, as we have seen, evoked chiefly by the revolutionary ideas of a young alien bourgeoisie and its idealistic nationalism. These national ideas and ideals were applied to the Jewish nation and, nourished by the messianic hopes and dreams of Ghetto Jews, gave rise to a Jewish national movement which, in the second phase of assimilation, was already devoid of all its Jewish elements and owed its existence almost solely to modern anti-Semitism. In the Hellenistic period, the first phase of this Jewish national movement was different from that of the corresponding phase of other periods of assimilation in so far as it was stimulated by the national ideals both of the Greeks and of the Palestinian Jews; and it was nourished not by dreams of Ghetto Jews, but by the national struggles of their co-patriots in the Fatherland. In the second phase, however, the national movement among Hellenist Jews was analogous in almost every detail to the corresponding movement of the assimilated Jews in the Arabian and Western civilizations.

The ultimate fate of the Hellenist Jews is obscure. Many, no doubt, perished in the recurrent anti-Semitic outbreaks and the chaos which arose at that period. The majority, however, were certainly swept away by the diverse syncretistic movements of the Hellenistic second religiousness, the most important of which was the Christianity of the Hellenist world. Some, too, may have



been attracted by movements which were part of *Israel's* second religiousness, and have eventually been transformed into Ghetto Jews. At all events, when Hellenism declined and decayed the spiritual life of the Jews living in its orbit followed suit, declining and decaying likewise. Ultimately the Hellenist Jews disappeared from the scene of Jewish history.

. . . . .

Next comes the Arabian period of Jewish assimilation. This period exhibits a greater similarity to the present period, since in both the Jews entered the world of alien civilizations as Ghetto Jews. The first manifestation of Jewish assimilation is in either case a strong reformation movement on the part of the enlightened Jews. The revolutionary ideas of an alien young bourgeoisie and the modern philosophical tendencies of the world at large broke down Ghetto walls and stirred up the Jews who for centuries had lived a life of Fellaheen behind their shelter. Fired with the enthusiasm and optimism of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, the Jews in the New World began to shake off the habits and manners of the Ghetto and plunge into the life of their environment. The intellectual energy of such enlightened Jews as were still intimately attached to Judaism was devoted to the task of reconciling Judaism with the new philosophical ideas of the master nations, and to the reformation of the Ghetto Jews' religion.

In the Arabian period of Jewish assimilation this reformation movement is known by the name of Karaism. The term, however, is generally misunderstood. Most Jewish historians since A. Geiger regard it as a revival of the spirit of the Sadducees, since both the Karaites

and the Sadducees are supposed to have repudiated tradition and adhered to the "Written Law" only. We shall see later how fundamentally wrong is this comparison between the Karaites and the Sadducees. But first let us join issue with Spengler, who regards Karaism as the original puritanic movement of reformation within one of the peoples of Magian culture. As such, he views Karaism as the "contemporary" manifestation of the puritanic movements inherent in all cultures. Spengler, having conceived of Judaism as an integral part of Magian culture, *had* to make Karaism concur with the Islamic reformation initiated by Mohammed and to regard it as having been of the same symbolic significance.

According to *our* conception of Jewish history, however, Israel's original reformation had long ago expressed itself in the Deuteronomic Reformation. In its source, character, and chronological occurrence, this movement was, as we have seen, fully consistent with Spengler's general Morphology of History, applying the latter to Israel as an autonomous culture with an independent life-course. Karaism, however, is in its very manifestation analogous to religious reform movements of European Jews living in the orbit of Western civilization. Both arise under the stimulus of the ideas of reformation contained within the Arabian or Western cultures, as the case may be, and both produce identical effects. They signify a revolt against Ghetto Judaism. The Karaites, under the influence of *Arabian* rationalism and the European Reform Jews, under the influence of *Western* rationalism, revolted against the rabbinic religion of the Ghetto Jews. In the name of Reason, both Karaites and Reform Jews rejected the fetters of the Oral Law and repudiated the authority of the rabbis. Released from

the spiritual bonds of the Ghetto, and impressed by the revolt of the alien bourgeoisie against the authority of Tradition, Karaites as well as Reform Jews battered at talmudic Judaism and labored for its destruction, as being incompatible with the notions of Rationalism and Liberalism. The Karaites contemptuously called the talmudical colleges of Sura and Pumbedita "the two old maids," and the attitude of the Reformers among the Jews of today towards the yeshivot, the old Jewish religious colleges, which still exist, has been in no way different.

Secondly, neither of these two reform movements was homogeneous. Contemporary Jewish liberals have exhibited a great divergence of opinion concerning religious reforms. On the one hand there are reformers who differ from the orthodox Jew only in that they advocate a slight modification of the synagogue service; and on the other there are revolutionary reformers who reject all traditional rites and forms of life including the Sabbath and circumcision, and who, reducing Judaism to a few liberal ethico-religious principles, propagate the idea of a compromise with Christianity, as an ethical religion. Between these two extremes, the mildly moderate and the radical revolutionary, there have been many degrees of reform and many conflicting movements. And yet all of them are massed under the common denominator—Reform.

Similarly, Karaism was not a consistent theological system based on the teachings of Anan, the supposed founder of Karaism. Anan himself advised, "Search the Scriptures diligently and lean not upon my opinions." In fact, there was among the Karaites as great a divergence of opinion, in regard both to the theoretical and to the practical aspect of Judaism, as among contemporary

Reform Jews. Benjamin Nehavend (830), to choose one example, was a very moderate reformer. In the Karaite code compiled by him he included the laws of the orthodox Rabbinites, "for those of the Karaites who might follow them if they so choose." On the other hand, there lived at about the same time another Karaite teacher, Hivi by name, who was a radical rationalist and a revolutionary reformer. He rejected the Written Law on the ground that it was not sufficiently motivated and contained contradictions. Tradition he renounced as disputable, Revelation as improbable, the sacrifices as improper, and circumcision as mutilation. Some of the Karaites acknowledged Jesus as teacher of Gentiles and Mohammed as prophet of the Arabs. On frequent occasions sharp controversies took place among them, reminiscent of the reputed disputes of the last century among the Reform Jews of Germany.

Moreover, the reaction evoked by both movements—Karaism and Reform Judaism—was of an identical nature. In defence of tradition, a modern Jewish Orthodoxy arose. Reform and Orthodoxy were corollaries and were related to each other as Karaism and Rabbinism. Both Reform and Orthodox Judaism are complementary manifestations of assimilative tendencies, and both are alien to genuine Ghetto Judaism. Karaism and Reform Judaism were given birth and shaped by the rationalist and liberal movements of the young alien civilizations, whereas Rabbinism and contemporary Orthodoxy were influenced by the conservative and reactionary tendencies exhibited by those same civilizations. In defence of their opinions and programs, both Karaites and Rabbinites, as well as Reform and Orthodox Jews, use concepts, ideas, and methods of argumentation originating in the philosophi-



cal and theological schools of the respective master nations. The ideological armor used by Saadiah Gaon and S. R. Hirsh, in their respective fights against Karaism and Reform Judaism, were as much borrowed from the philosophical arsenal of an alien civilization as that used by their adversaries.

It is admitted that Karaism revived the study of the Bible, neglected by the Ghetto Jews, and gave rise to the study of Hebrew grammar and lexicography, to Hebrew essay and poetic literature, to theological and philosophical speculations on Judaism, and so forth, all of which were written for the most part in the vernacular. But so did Reform Judaism of the contemporary period. The sharp controversy between the Karaites and the Rabbinites, like that between Reform and Orthodox Jews, was directly responsible in both periods for this revival of Jewish spirit, manifested in a rich literature in both Hebrew and the vernacular. Even in talmudic studies a more modern spirit and a more scientific method were introduced. Instead of the casuistic interpretation of the traditional law and the old juggling with words and letters, attempts were made to arrive at a historical and rational understanding of all the works of the past. Ghetto Jews indulged in hair-splitting discussions, piling commentaries upon commentaries, annotations upon annotations, very often without aim or sense. The modern Jew, however, makes historical, philosophical, and philological revisions of the tradition and compiles systematic research works and codices. Saadiah Gaon, Alfassi, Samuel Ben Chofni, Hai Gaon, Chananel ben Hushiel, Jehudah Halevi, Gabirol, Maimonides, and many others were "contemporaries" of Zunz, Geiger, Krochmal, J. H. Weiss, Bacher, and Krauss. True, the Jewish intellectual celebri-

ties of the Arabian period differed in some respects from those of the period under discussion. This difference, however, had nothing to do with the stage of development of Judaism. Judaism had for long been timeless, and time no longer determined the character of Jewish spirituality. It was the difference existent between the *Arabian* and *Western* civilizations that made the works of Arabian Jews differ from those of contemporary Western Jews.

In passing, it may be pointed out that this same difference was manifested in the modern Hebrew poetry of both periods. This poetry underwent in each epoch an identical process of development. At first Arabian and European "maskilim"—i. e., modern Jews enlightened by the respective civilizations—produced an artificial Hebrew style consisting largely of an incoherent combination of detached biblical phrases, bizarre word-formations, and unnatural phraseology. Gradually, however, under the influence of the great literary works of master nations, the literary taste of the Jews developed and a new, polished Hebrew style was produced. Thus the artificial style of the "paitanim," Hebrew liturgists of the Arabian period, such as Eliezer Kalir, developed into the refined, cultured style of Jehudah Halevi or Moses ibn Eza, while the bizarre style of the "maskilim" of last century developed into the polished and educated style of a Bialik or a Tschernichovsky. The difference between Jehudah Halevi and Bialik is conditioned by the difference between Arabian and European poetry. The "re-birth" of Hebrew signifies chiefly the application of an alien style, diction, rhyme, and construction to the old national language of the Jews. It is a synthesis the alien elements of which gradually predominate until Hebrew becomes es-

entially an Arabian or a European language as the case may be.

One of the reasons why Karaism has been misunderstood is that it is regarded as a sect of distinctive character. We have already proved that it was not of a homogeneous nature. It is, however, true that eventually it was transformed into a rigid, sterile sect. But in this respect Karaism did not differ from Reform Judaism of the contemporary period. From the outset the Rabbinites made no distinction between the diverse currents within Karaism, regarding all Karaites indiscriminately as a heretical sect, cut off from traditional Judaism. This, however, has been the attitude also of orthodox rabbis to the followers of contemporary Reform Judaism. The antagonism between Orthodoxy and Reform has generally been so sharp that orthodox rabbis have made scarcely any distinction between Reform synagogues and churches of foreign denomination. In some cases Reform Jews (as, for example, the Neologues of Hungary and the diversity of liberal synagogues in various cities of Europe and America) have already organized themselves into a kind of a sect of rigid form and fixed ritual, and, dissociated from traditional Judaism, undergone a spiritual development of their own. It is difficult to predict whether present day Reform Judaism will share the ultimate fate of Karaism, but the tendency towards this end is already clearly marked. However, future events in the Americo-European world may check and thwart this trend; in fact, they are doing so even now. Many of the Karaites assimilated completely, and if it had not been for the modern anti-Semitism amongst the Moslems, they would have disappeared. The same applies to the Reform Jews of today. Most of them are assimilated Jews, and in the

event of Reason prevailing and anti-Semitism disappearing their movement is fated to die out completely.

Thus, the perfect and striking analogy between Karaism and Reform Judaism as regards their origin, their historical character, their course of development, and the events and phenomena to which they have given rise, has furnished us with another proof that our conception of Israel is absolutely consistent. This analogy is inexplicable in terms of Spengler's conception of Judaism, whereas into our picture of Israel's history it fits completely.

The logical conclusions we have drawn from our analysis of Karaism also refute the theory that the Karaites were spiritual heirs of the Sadducees. The Sadducees were, as we saw, conservatives, opposed to the liberal innovation of the democratic Pharisees, whereas the Karaites were modern reformers stimulated by Arabian rationalism and reformation. The name "Karaites," denoting "Sons of Scripture," and the fact that both the Karaites and the Sadducees rejected the teachings of the rabbis, have misled Geiger and his followers into supposing that the Karaites inherited the Sadducees' spiritual make-up. This conclusion, however, is entirely fallacious and based on the surface appearance of historical events rather than on their inner significance.

In the time of the Sadducees, the "Written Law" (the Bible) was the Tradition, whereas the Pharisaic "Oral Law" was predominantly the product of the advanced, genuine Jewish Democracy and Liberalism. The conservative Sadducees rejected the "Oral Law" as a piece of liberal reformism undermining their authority and power, anchored in tradition. In the time of the Karaites, however, the "Oral Law" (the Talmud) had long ago



ceased to be oral and had become the "Written Law" and the tradition of Ghetto Jews. It superseded the old "Written Law"—the Bible—and became itself the Ghetto Jews' Bible. The Karaites, in revolt against Ghetto Judaism, rejected the Talmud upon which it was based, but in their return to the Bible they were not actuated by the conservative spirit of the Sadducees. On the contrary, they were influenced by rationalism and liberalism, even though the latter were not of Jewish origin. The old Bible, embodying the spirit of Israel's culture and early civilization, and for this reason, neglected by Ghetto Jews, naturally appealed to the enlightened reformers much more than did the Talmud. *All* modern Jews prefer the Bible to the Talmud, whereas Ghetto Jews prefer the latter. Moreover, the Karaites did not follow the Bible blindly. We have noted what revolutionary conclusions a Hivi derived from his rational interpretation of the Bible. Thus, the Karaites were adepts at revolutionary rationalism of Arabian origin, whereas the Sadducees were genuine Jewish conservatives. The Arabian and Western contemporary equivalent of the Sadducees—i. e., the conservatives, who in support of their particular tradition fought against the disintegrative forces of rationalism and liberalism—exercised a strong influence on the Rabbinites and Orthodox Jews respectively. Consequently, there was a much stronger spiritual affinity between Rabbinites and Orthodox Jews and the Sadducees than existed between the last named and the Karaites and Reform Jews.

The Sadducees, like the conservatives of all civilizations, decayed, and with the destruction of the Jewish state they disappeared, whereas Karaism, resulting from the impact of a young alien civilization upon Ghetto

Judaism, passed through the same development as have all analogous movements. Many Karaites assimilated altogether and were absorbed in the native population, and the rest were transformed into a rigid, sterile sect.

It was found expedient to include in our survey of Karaism the whole range of Jewish intellectual activities that followed upon the impact of an alien civilization on Ghetto Jews. Concurrently with this "Renaissance" of Jewish spiritual life, the process of assimilation went on and gathered momentum. Language, manners, and habits of the master nations were adopted; new ideas and concepts were assimilated; intermarriages increased and many lost their national identity. The Hispano-Arabic period is remembered for its flourishing Jewish literature, and is for that reason called the "golden period," but in actual fact Jewish life in the sphere of Arabic civilization went through the same process of denationalization as that through which the Hellenist Jews had gone and through which modern Jewish life in the orbit of Western civilization is now going. The old Jewish academies throughout the Arabian world (including the great academies of Sura and Pumbedita) withered away for the same reasons that are causing the decay of the Jewish colleges of today, the yeshivot. The religious Fellaheen learning of the Jews has rapidly declined in all periods of assimilation.

The generally accepted theory that when the sun of Judaism set in the Babylonian East it rose in the Spanish West, is also entirely fallacious. Indeed, the whole idea of a spiritual centre of Judaism shifting from place to place by some mysterious power is pure nonsense. The religious academies of the Babylonian Ghetto Jews were closed simply because Ghetto Judaism was too weak to

resist the disintegrative forces of the rising Arabian civilization. Karaism and other assimilative tendencies destroyed it in the same way as Reform Judaism and the various modern assimilative tendencies are destroying the Ghetto Judaism of today. True, the Talmud itself contains "modern" elements, introduced under the influence of the old Babylonian and Persian civilizations. But in the period preceding the Arabian invasion the Jews of the East were distinctly a people of Fellaheen. Samuel, the great Babylonian rabbi, was a famous scholar of medicine and astronomy. He could boast that he was as familiar with the paths of the sky as with the streets of his own town, Nehardea. Soon after his death (247), however, Babylonian Jewry relapsed into the state of Fellaheen. The hair-splitting discussions which took place between Raba (352) and Abaye (338) already showed distinct characteristics of Ghetto Judaism. For about four centuries the Babylonian Jews remained at this stage—until, in fact, the Arabs stirred them out of their Ghetto life and thus broke up Babylonian Ghetto Judaism. Concurrently with the decadence of talmudic Judaism, a revival of modern Jewish literature took place, not only in Spain but in *all* lands under Islamic influence (Babylon, Palestine, Egypt, and Italy). That Spain, at a later stage of this development, produced more illustrious poets, philosophers, grammarians, lexicographers, and compilers of codices than the Babylonian East, is due to the fact that the centre of *Arabian* civilization had accidentally come into being in Spain and matured there, so that Spain attracted more and more Jews and those who lived there were exposed to the influence of Arabian civilization more than were the Jews of other Islamic countries. Modern Judaism has always flourished in centres of alien

civilizations. Cordova was a Spanish Berlin, and just as the flourishing Judaism of the Jewish intellectuals of Berlin has differed from that of their Ghetto ancestors and that of the contemporary Ghetto Jews of Poland and Lithuania, so had the Judaism of the Jewish intellectuals of Cordova differed from that of their pre-Mohammedan ancestors and that of the central European Ghetto Jews of those days. Neither Berlin nor Cordova produced Ghetto rabbis of any significance. Maimonides, who is regarded as the greatest celebrity of the Spanish "golden period," was a thoroughly modern rabbi. He was also a physician of repute, and all of his works except *Mishneh Torah* were written in Arabic. Morphologically, his works and the works of the modern Western rabbis are identical in character and origin and differ in equal degree from those of their Ghetto ancestors and the contemporaries of the latter.

In the first fourteen hundred years of Israel's life-course there had been a shifting of the cultural centre such as is inherent in all cultures. It shifted from the countryside to town, and from Megalopolis to Cosmopolis, but this shift did not necessarily connote a change of locality. It was rather a natural variation of economic, social, and spiritual conditions. During the last eighteen hundred years, however, the rise of a Jewish "Spiritual Centre" has been conditioned by accidental forces operating *outside* Judaism. Consequently, the mysterious shifting of a "Spiritual Centre" of Judaism from Babylon to Spain, or from Poland to Germany, resolves itself into a purely fortuitous change in the character of Jewish spirituality, resulting from the impact of an alien civilization. Wherever an *alien* civilization happens to centre, there the Jews, enlightened by it, are spiritually more



active than in the provinces, and their activity produces the so-called "Spiritual Centre."

In the particular case of Jews living in the orbit of Arabic culture, we find that this transformation process had begun not in Spain but in the East, cradle of Arabian culture and civilization. The Karaites, Saadiah Gaon, Eliezer Kalir, and the other worthy forerunners of the great Jewish intellectual luminaries of Spain, did not live in Spain. The so-called Spanish "golden period" in Jewish history had begun in the eighth century in the East and continued in *all* Islamic countries till the decay of the Arabian civilization. For about two centuries only modern Judaism flourished in Spain more vigorously than anywhere else in the Islamic world, and this was due to the fact that the centre of the Arabian civilization of that time happened to have settled in Spain. Ghetto Judaism continued its existence chiefly outside the sphere of Arabian culture, in France or Germany, until in these countries, too, an alien culture reached a high stage of development. Drawing the Jews out of their spiritual isolation, that culture brought them into its orbit and subjected them to a process of development analogous to that of Jews who had lived in the sphere of the Hellenist or, later on, Arabian civilization. A new Jewish "Spiritual Centre" arose in this fashion in Berlin.

The second phase of the Arabian period of Jewish assimilation was also similar in all its manifestations to that of the Hellenistic period in the past and the European in the present. The de-nationalization of Jews progressed so rapidly that towards the decline of the Arabian civilization many Jews accepted Mohammedanism without much scruple. Ignorance of things Jewish became a mass phenomenon. A Jewish satirist of that time—Al-Harizi—

derided his co-religionists for not even being able to read prayers. His amusing picture of the communal life and the synagogue service of that time applies with striking exactitude to the phenomena of the present decay of Judaism. If it had not been for the Arabian modern anti-Semitism and the invasion of Spain by the "young" Visigoths, Spanish Jewry would have disappeared altogether. However, in the wake of the disintegration of the Arabian civilization and its decay followed demoralization of social life and a chaos of mystical movements. Rationalism declined, and in the twelfth century the Arabian philosopher Al-Ghazali glorified Religion in opposition to Philosophy. Concurrently with this decadence of Arabian civilization, the spiritual life of the Jews who lived in its orbit decayed also. Jehudah Halevi, disciple of Al-Ghazali, following in the footsteps of his teacher, made Jewish philosophy the handmaid of religious Judaism. Herein lies the origin of the great controversy between the followers and the opponents of Maimonides. The opponents of Maimonides were followers of Jewish mysticism, whereas the surviving Jewish rationalists were his supporters.

When Arabian Rationalism was in the ascendant, Jewish intellectual activity awoke and grew more and more intensive. Assimilation was a peaceful process, and intermarriages and conversions represented a mass phenomenon of inherent necessity. When, however, Rationalism eventually declined, giving place to mysticism, and the enlightened nationalism became superseded by chauvinistic fanaticism, breeding hatred of aliens and a distaste for the unlike, the Jews either submitted themselves to forced conversions or, repelled by the new turn of events,

withdrew into the Ghetto. When Ibn Tumert, a disciple of the mystic Al-Ghazali, invaded Moorish Spain in the twelfth century at the head of the fanatical Almohades, the tolerance and the civil rights which the Jews had enjoyed were abolished. The Jews were placed in the dilemma of having to choose between conversion or emigration. Most of the Jews preferred conversion, as their association with Judaism was already very loose. Their attitude contracts forcibly with that of the Ghetto Jews, who have as a rule preferred not merely emigration, but even death, to conversion.

The root-cause of the rise of the Almohades was economic demoralization of the wealthy class in contrast with the poverty and sufferings of the lower class. The Almohades were a contemporary equivalent of the Hellenist Appionites as well as of the Nazis of today, and equally anti-Semitic, and their effects on Jewish life were of an analogous nature. Those who did not submit to conversion were thrust back into Judaism, and their national consciousness was intensified. Even Zionism manifested itself. Jehudah Halevi was not only a modern Jewish mystic but a Zionist as well. Together with his friends, he left Spain for the Holy Land. Whether they reached their destination or not is of no significance. If the conditions had been favorable for Jewish settlement in Palestine, we would probably now have to describe a Zionist movement comparable with that of today. In the general conditions of those days, however, with Palestine in the hands of the Crusaders, Zionism was doomed from the outset.

Instead of settling in Palestine, the Jews wandered about looking for a resting place in some other country. Among these wanderers were many Jewish celebrities

such as the family of Maimonides, who, after having spent some time in Palestine, returned disappointed to Egypt and settled there.

We are accustomed to think that the invasion of Spain by the primitive Visigoths was mainly responsible for the interruption of the Arabs' spiritual life as well as of that of the Jews. This is, historically, a fallacious assumption. Arabian civilization decayed as a result of its own natural development. It declined for the same reasons for which the Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek, and all other civilizations declined. Thus, it was not the Christian Visigoths who put an end to the Spanish "golden period" in Jewish history; it terminated mainly in sympathy with the inward decline of Arabian civilization. Actually, many Jews escaped from Moorish Spain into the *Christian* kingdoms of the same peninsula, where they found refuge and continued to pursue their intellectual activity. In this way they transmitted knowledge to the peoples of the young Western culture until, in the year 1492, they were expelled as the result of *primitive* anti-Semitism.

The ultimate fate of the Arabian Jews is as uncertain as that of the Alexandrian Jews. We do not know how many Jews were absorbed in the native population of the Arabian world, nor how many survived nationally as Ghetto Jews. The many communities of Jews speaking Ladino and Arabic in North Africa, Syria, Turkey, and the Balkan States consist chiefly of Ghetto Jews differing in character from the Ghetto Jews of other countries only in so far as their Ghetto Judaism embodies some of the customs, manners, and habits of the Islamic Fellaheen.

While the Arabian civilization was in its decline and modern anti-Semitism was spreading in the Islamic world,



wide sections of the Jewish population had already been completely assimilated, but there were at the same time still many Jews who had hardly left the Ghetto. The process of assimilation of the latter was then stopped and they remained in the Ghetto. Many of the assimilated Jews, however, whose Jewish self-consciousness had been aroused and intensified by anti-Semitism, turned to Jewish national mysticism, the development of which was on parallel lines to that of Arabian mysticism; and concurrently with the Islamic peoples turning into Fellaheen, they underwent the process of transformation into Ghetto Jews. Those who, either through natural assimilation or through forced conversion, had been absorbed into the native population, were swept away together with the Arabs by the diverse movements of the Arabian second religiousness, and in due course they became Islamic Fellaheen in analogy to those Hellenized Jews who turned Christian. These observations, it should be added, apply not only to the Spanish Jews, but to all Jews living in Islamic countries.

In the course of our exposition of the tendencies exhibited by the Jews in the two periods of assimilation—Hellenistic and Arabian—we have made so many references to the present-day period of Jewish assimilation that it would be superfluous to examine the latter separately. Nevertheless it will be necessary in the next chapter, which deals with topical Jewish problems of today, to pay some additional attention to the historical development of contemporary modern Judaism.

### XIII. TENDENCIES IN CONTEMPORARY JUDAISM

The ground is now prepared for an understanding, on a world history basis, of all the problems which confront contemporary Jewry. However, this chapter will contain only such general conclusions as are to be drawn from Israel's Morphology as expounded in this book. An exhaustive examination of the present situation of world Jewry would require a book to itself. As the object of the preceding chapters was to give an *interpretation* of Israel's history rather than to relate the happenings of the past, so it is the aim of the present chapter to view Jewry's present day problems in the light of our conception of history, rather than to narrate the happenings in the contemporary Jewish world.

First let us deal with the question of Jewish survival. According to our conception of Israel's life-course, the longevity of the Jewish people is no longer an enigma. The Jews are not the oldest people living. The Indians and the Chinese are not younger, and the causes of their longevity are the same as those of the Jews. The only argument that can be brought against this conclusion is that the Chinese and Indians have always lived in the country of their cultural origin, whereas the Jews have for the last two thousand years been dispersed. This argument, however, is vitiated by the fact that there have likewise been peoples of Fellaheen living for many centuries in the diaspora without having become assimilated

and absorbed into the native population. The Parsees have lived since the eighth century among Indians without having lost their national identity. They are no less a people of Fellaheen than the Jews. Both the Jews and the Parsees are remarkable for superior intelligence and business acumen. Their traditions exhibit analogous characteristics. The Avesta is the Bible of the Parsees, written in Zend, their holy language. Their Zoroastrian tradition resembles the tradition of the Ghetto Jews. The *desturs*, rabbis of the Parsees, regulate the religious life of the people. It is a well-known fact that the morality of both the Parsees and Ghetto Jews, especially as regards family life, is of a high standard.

Yet this analogy does not answer the question of why neither the Jews nor the Parsees have assimilated and disappeared. The theory that Jewish survival constitutes a mysterious exception in world history has been disproved, but the reasons why they did survive are still not yet explained. The solution of this problem is implied in our outline of Israel's history. Physical annihilation can befall a nation at any period of its development. It may be overrun by external conquerors and destroyed. Spiritually, however, a people of Fellaheen can be annihilated only when it comes into direct and intimate contact with an alien civilization not yet in its period of decline. Uncivilized peoples and peoples of decaying civilizations exercise no attraction for peoples of Fellaheen, and thus the latter are immune against assimilation. The Ghetto of the Parsees was "inbuilt" in the world of Indian Fellaheen, and thus was saved from spiritual assimilation. The Jews, on the other hand, in all their long history have been threatened with cultural extinction only when they came into contact with advancing civilizations—Hellenist,

Persian, Arabian, and the contemporary Western. Uncivilized peoples and peoples of decaying civilizations have persecuted, slaughtered, and massacred them, but only when drawn into the orbit of advancing civilizations have they been subjected to spiritual annihilation. The four and a half million Jews existent in the first century C. E. were by the end of the fifteenth century reduced to one and a half. Consequently, in the first fourteen centuries of the Christian Era the Jewish population had been reduced to thirty per cent of its former total, whereas in the last hundred and fifty years it has increased about sixfold (from two and a half to sixteen million)! How near to extinction had the Jews been at one time! Their absorption in the Hellenist, Persian, and Arabian worlds, the massacres perpetrated by uncivilized peoples such as the pre-Mohammedan Arabs and the Crusaders, the outbreaks of modern anti-Semitism, such as those of the Hellenist Appionites, the neo-Persian Sassanians, or the Islamic Almohades—these fateful experiences in their history had by the end of the fifteenth century brought the Jews to the verge of extinction. That they nevertheless survived was due to the fact that they happened to be so widely scattered that the external conditions of their life were never uniform. Thus, when one section was undergoing a process of assimilation or exposed to physical annihilation, another lived in peace among uncivilized peoples or peoples of Fellaheen. During the time that one group of Jews was living in the sphere of the Arabian civilization and being subjected to national disintegration and dissolution, there were many Jews living in other parts of the world where assimilation was impossible; and again, when in the middle ages the uncivilized peoples of Central Europe were about



to annihilate the Jews living among them, many Jews continued to dwell peacefully in Turkey or in Poland.

To sum up, there is no mystery about the survival of the Jewish people and it can be explained with scientific precision. The question, however, whether the Jews will retain their national identity in the future depends rather on what course Western civilization will take than on the "national will" of the Jews themselves.

We have repeatedly pointed out that in modern society economic interests are the most decisive driving forces of life in almost all its manifestations. Hence, the examination of the economic situation of world Jewry is of paramount importance, and to this we shall now devote our attention. In connection with our study of Ghetto Jews and our analysis of modern anti-Semitism, we have already touched upon Jewish economic problems. Here, however, we propose to give a more comprehensive, though, so far as possible, brief exposition of the economic situation of world Jewry.

The ideal economic structure of a nation is often figuratively represented by a pyramid, the consecutive layers of which from the bottom to the top consist of agriculture, the mining industry, manufacture, distributive trades, civil service, and, lastly, professional occupations. In the period of economic development preceding the decay of Capitalism, such a well-balanced national economic structure is possible provided there are available adequate natural resources. This balance is still today an ideal to which all reactionary nationalists aspire, because a well-balanced economic structure secures economic self-sufficiency, and this is of vital importance in wartime or when international trade breaks down. England, for example, if successfully blockaded, could

easily be forced to surrender, since the foundation of her economic structure is too narrow to sustain her. For this reason she attempts to de-industrialize her economic life, her economists and politicians evolving schemes for the transference of part of her industrial workers to the land. Conversely, there are nations the foundation of whose economic structure is too broad—its upper layers are too narrow and out of proportion to the whole pyramid. Russia concentrates her energy on the industrialization of her huge territory in order to make herself invulnerable in case war should break out or the capitalist world sever its commercial relations with her. In the light of Reason, this tendency towards economic autarchy is absurd. In a cosmopolitan world where steamers, aircraft, trains, telegraphs, and telephones have abolished boundaries and made the beneficial international exchange of goods so easy, the struggle for economic independence must be considered reactionary in the extreme. In the present circumstances, however, when a rational organization of production and distribution on an international scale is obstructed by irrational nationalism backed by vested interests struggling against foreign competitors, the national aspiration to economic independence is justifiable. In a mad world, tariffs and dumping duties, subsidies and inflations of currency are indispensable weapons in defence of the national economic structure. From a cosmopolitan point of view they are wasteful and senseless, but in a world resembling a madhouse they are as necessary as the equally absurd unemployment dole.

Now what does the Jewish economic structure look like, and what are the weapons at the disposal of Jews in their economic and political struggle? It is obvious that the vocational structure of the Jews cannot be compared

to a pyramid at all. We saw that as Ghetto Jews living among uncivilized peoples they were engaged in occupations to which the native population had not yet advanced. Consequently they were, as vanguards of economic progress, the first to build upon the foundation of the economic structure of alien peoples, those upper layers standing for commerce, finance, and free professions. But historically it is not true that the Jews have *always* been "parasites" battenning upon the economic body of alien peoples. Before the destruction of the Jewish State, the economic structure of Palestinian Jews was of a similar symbolic shape to that of other peoples in a corresponding period of their development. With the decline of the Jewish State, the pyramidal structure tottered and eventually collapsed. Those Jews who continued to live on the soil as small farmers or agricultural laborers were absorbed into the various native populations. They were the backward section of Jewry with as yet undeveloped national consciousness, and as such they were an easy prey to assimilation. Those Jews, however, who survived and retained their national identity—the advanced section of Jewry, disposed to emigration—were by reason of their superior intelligence given to occupations that required mental alertness rather than the primitive skill of manual labor. For this reason the economic position of these Jews has always been most vulnerable. It has been affected not only by changes occurring in international trade, but also by the development of the individual nations among whom they have lived. With the economic progress of the native population, resulting in a broadening of the upper layers of the pyramidal structure, the position of the Jews becomes precarious. When the native youth, sons of peasants and manual la-

borers, impetuously climb up the pyramid and collide on their way with Jews, competition begins, bringing the eventual result that the Jews have to clear out. When the upward pressure from the bottom grows so strong that the upper layers become overcrowded and will accommodate no more aspirants, attempts are made by the up-thrusting native youth to oust the "alien Jew." It has already been pointed out that this scramble for more lucrative jobs and occupations is the root-cause of modern anti-Semitism. The Jews are decried as "parasites" because they stand in the way of the native population in its own rapid advance towards "parasitism."

The result of this struggle is that the bricks laid by Jews in the upper layers of the economic pyramid of master nations either sink into lower layers or are thrown out altogether. The number of Jews withstanding the pressure is constantly decreasing. The victims have no alternative but emigration. In the last fifty years, a period of unprecedented economic progress for all countries of Western civilization, millions of Jews have been forced to emigrate. Up till recently, the United States provided the chief dumping market for the broken bricks ejected from various European countries. In 1890 there were 500,000 Jews in the United States; now there are 4,500,000. These bricks were of great help in the erection of new national economic pyramids, but owing to the rapidity of contemporary economic development the process of their re-ejection has already gone far in the new countries into which they were so recently imported.

Formerly, living among uncivilized peoples, the Jews were either massacred or driven out as the result of *primitive* anti-Semitism, the character of which was re-



ligious rather than economic. The anti-Semitic outbursts of the Middle Ages may have been less subtle than those of modern anti-Semitism. But from the economic point of view the position of Jews in those dark ages was much sounder than it is now. Driven from one place, it was not difficult for the Jews of those days to establish themselves in another. Almost anywhere they could find peoples living in primitive economic conditions who stood in need of the capabilities and experience of the Jews. There was unlimited scope for merchants and financiers. Moreover, a country from which the Jews had been driven soon realized that their departure was injurious to its economic life, and in many instances the Jewish exiles were invited to return. Now, however, there is no escape, no refuge to be found, and the departure of the Jews from an industrialized country no longer exposes it to the danger of fatal economic dislocation. The Jews can now easily be replaced. There are no longer free markets for the broken bricks thrown out of the various economic pyramids. There are many countries eager to export them, but none to import. The rising flood of Jewish emigration has been dammed and all the sluices locked. Masses of Jews are now economically suspended in the air, and the ground sinks deeper and deeper from beneath their feet.

In the past periods of modern anti-Semitism there were still possibilities of escape. From the Hellenistic world the Jews could have found refuge in the undeveloped east or north, and they actually did wander to Arabia, Parthia, and even Spain and southern Russia; from the Islamic world they escaped to the uncivilized peoples of Spain, France, and Germany, and later on to Poland and Russia. From the Americo-European world, however,

there is no escape. True, there are still many undeveloped countries with immense populations, but they are jealously guarded by the capitalist empires and prevented, so far as possible, from achieving economic self-sufficiency by building up a fully developed economic structure of their own.

This precarious economic situation of world-Jewry has been immensely aggravated by the general trend of modern economic life. As Marx predicted, the independent middle class is being rapidly impoverished and eliminated. As the result of the Industrial Revolution and the competitive character of economic life, Rationalization—signifying reduction of cost price to the lowest possible level by elimination of waste in time, human labor and material—has developed to such an extent that it has already overstepped the limits imposed on it by the self-contradictory Imperialistic Capitalism. Now attempts are being made to restrict it. In the circumstances, the process of competitive rationalization of industry, finance, and commerce is producing disastrous effects on the economic life of nations. First, the small artisans, shopkeepers, and moneylenders, i. e., the independent middle class, are being annihilated. Factories, chain stores, and big banks are making them obsolete. Second, this rationalization creates unemployment by substituting the machine for human labor. The machine is ultimately cheaper and more submissive. Third, it centralizes the control of economic life in the hands of an ever-decreasing number of trusts and corporations, and thus promotes the monopolization of production, distribution, and credit. Roosevelt says, "A careful investigation into business concentration elucidates the fact that our economic life is being controlled by some six hundred corporations embracing two-

thirds of American industry. The remaining one-third is distributed among some ten millions of small business men. This fact makes it abundantly clear that should the process of concentration proceed at the same pace, we will have at the end of the next century the whole of American industry controlled by a dozen corporations with about a hundred directors."

Roosevelt, though endorsing the Marxian theory, is wrong in his forecast. Rationalization applied by capitalists for the sake of profit has, in the highly developed countries, already outgrown its usefulness, and under the present system no further development is possible. America's twelve million unemployed, with industrial plants closed down, agricultural and industrial output restricted (and in some cases even deliberately destroyed), are an indisputable proof that Rationalization within the capitalist world is on the decline, and that only by a revolutionary change of the system can it be saved from complete decay. A Rationalization, however, the application of which is determined not by profit but by the needs of society, might effect the complete concentration of control over industry and distribution in a much shorter time than that envisaged by Roosevelt.

This digression into general economics was necessary in order to shed light upon the economic conditions of world-Jewry and its future prospects. Rationalization, whichever course it may take, is incomparably more harmful to Jews than to any other nation. The Jews belong overwhelmingly to the independent middle class, and an occupational reconstruction is in the present circumstances beset with insurmountable difficulties for them. There is unemployment in almost every branch of agriculture, industry, commerce, banking, and the intel-

lectual professions. In Russia, where the Revolution exterminated the middle class, the Jews were the first to suffer economically. There at least, however, the declassed Jews, and especially their children, have a chance of readjustment to the new economic conditions, because in a socialist state there is no conceivable reason why people capable and willing to work should not find employment. They can no longer be independent merchants, private manufacturers, or moneylenders, but they can and do become laborers, clerks, engineers, doctors, and civil servants. In the decaying capitalist world, on the other hand, even if we ignore the anti-Semitic discrimination against the Jews, the position of Jews is hopeless. Their economic readjustment is as impossible as the solution of the unemployment problem. How can Jews hope to attain economic security when millions of unemployed of almost all nationalities have no hope of ever being permanently re-employed? Under existing conditions there is no economic security whatsoever for many millions of people, and for the Jews least of all. There is only one lasting solution, and it is—radical alteration of the present economic system.

To make the economic fate of the Jews still clearer, let us compare it with that of England. It was in England that the Industrial Revolution first took place, and from then until only recently England's supremacy in the world-market remained unchallenged. London was the undisputed centre of international trade, transport, and finance. In recent years, however, this exalted position of England has been challenged, and her influence, though still strong, has begun to wane. The reasons for this decline of England's economic power are analogous to those for which the Jews are being pushed out of



their economic positions. The advancement of the native population has made the Jews no longer indispensable. The intellectual capacity required for the positions hitherto occupied by Jews has been acquired by master nations to such an extent that the Jews can now be replaced. In a similar way England is becoming less and less indispensable on the world-market. Many nations which till not long ago were dependent on England for the majority of manufactured goods, have now developed their own industry and are inundating the world-market with manufactured goods, thus undermining England's economic position. And just as the Jews have promoted the economic development of the peoples among whom they have lived, so has England assisted foreign countries in their industrial development with finance and equipment, and both the Jews and the British have thus made themselves increasingly superfluous. This does not, however, imply that if it had not been for the Jews a strong native middle class would not have arisen, or that without England's assistance the industrialization of other countries would not have taken place. Each has no doubt accelerated the respective process, but in any case the same results would eventually have been produced. At all events, both the Jews and the British were everywhere the vanguards of economic progress, but now they are playing out their role, and as a result they are sharing the same fate. England at least has weapons at her disposal to defend her position and to ward off the imminent danger of an economic catastrophe, whereas the Jews are almost defenceless. They cannot put up tariffs, fix quotas, or inflate the currency. The Jewish boycott instituted spontaneously against Germany is not a weapon in defence of the tottering economic structure of the Jews but one di-

rected against official anti-Semitic persecution. It cannot therefore be considered here. Our contention is that, with or without these overt anti-Semitic discriminations, the Jews are on the verge of an economic collapse, and that no boycott, however successful it may be, can avert it. What means do we possess, for instance, of rescuing the Polish Jews from their disastrous economic plight? And their economic position is not better than that of the German Jews. A Jewish boycott cannot change the general trend of modern economy, as a result of which the chief Jewish occupations become anachronistic and have to be discarded. Regarded from the bird's-eye view which we have taken of Israel's fate in this book, there is only one clear-cut remedy for the maladies of Jewish economic life, and it is scientific *Socialism*. True, a socialist revolution will be economically more painful to the Jews than to other peoples, since the Jews are in far the highest proportion engaged in occupations which, in a socialist state based on a rationally planned economy, are useless. But only in a socialist state can the occupational reconstruction of the Jews, which in any case is of vital urgency, be planned and carried out with lasting success. There is no other alternative. Socialism based on rationally planned economy would, naturally, also solve the social and political problems with which Jewish people are confronted today. Should poverty be abolished and the relationship between individuals and nations be determined by humane and rational considerations, anti-Semitism, which is a child of Unreason, would in due course disappear. As pointed out, however, the course which Western civilization is taking does not essentially differ from that through which the civilizations of the past have gone. It has already entered its second period,

the period of "Formation of Caesarism" (in Spengler's terminology) which is characterized by the growth of mysticism resulting in chaos and anarchy in all spheres of life.

As proved in the preceding chapter, the first phase exhibited tendencies exactly analogous to those exhibited in the corresponding phase of the past periods of Jewish assimilation—Hellenist and Arabian. European civilization has up to now shared the fate of Hellenist and Arabian civilizations and, as Spengler predicted, goes through the same life-course. The second phase of the assimilation of Western Jews is therefore exhibiting tendencies and phenomena equally analogous to those exhibited by Hellenist and Arabian Jews in the corresponding phase of their assimilation. Unless Reason prevails, persecution and massacres may destroy the Jews as they did in the past periods of Jewish assimilation. In the chaos of unfettered nationalism, and in the conflict of growing mystical and fanatical movements, the Jews may either be annihilated or thrust back into the Ghetto. Only when Reason triumphs and becomes dictator of human life will Jewish sufferings, degradation, and spiritual decadence cease to be. It is interesting to note that just at the time when, in the West, Racialism has begun to abdicate and to give place to a diversity of irrational "isms," in Russia, Reason is being worshiped and propagated with all the religious fervor characteristic of "young" people. Thus, while in the *West* the national consciousness of assimilated Jews is being intensified by modern anti-Semitism, in *Russia* traditional Judaism is in process of being uprooted and subjected to disintegration and dissolution.

Consequently, if Spengler's forecast of the future of Western civilization comes true, his prediction that Jews

in the Americo-European world would disappear becomes more than doubtful. Recent events in Spengler's own fatherland prove the truth of this statement. Should Reason, however, prevail and succeed in regulating human relations, then Spengler's forecast of the fate of the Western Jews may materialize, while his "Decline of the West" will turn out to have been merely a nightmare.

Unfortunately, the West *is* declining as Spengler predicted, and therefore his forecast regarding the disappearance of Jews from the Americo-European world is being proved illusory. Anti-Semitism has checked the process of Jewish assimilation and strengthened the national consciousness of Jews. The social and political events in contemporary Jewish life are therefore analogous to those of the corresponding phase of Jewish assimilation in both the Hellenistic and Islamic worlds. The violent anti-Semitic attacks of the Alexandrian Jew-baiter Appion, and his fantastic theories regarding Israel's descent and character, do not differ in any essential respect from the pseudo-scientific racial theories of Houston Chamberlain, or the absurd Nazi accusations. In the Arabian period also we find Jew-baiting of exactly the same character as the contemporary. When, for instance, the king of Granada appointed a Jew to be a minister of his kingdom, a Mohammedan poet—Abu Ishkan Elviri—incited the mob, saying, "The Jews cherish illusions of becoming our masters and treat the Moslems with contempt." The results of this "modern" form of "anti-Semitism" have always been the same—massacres, expulsions, and forced conversions. Thousands of Alexandrian Jews were slaughtered, many emigrated, and most of the remainder submitted to conversion. The same thing happened to the Jews in the Arabian world. Resulting from the agitation



of the Mohammedan poet, the Jewish minister and some four thousand Jewish inhabitants of Granada were massacred, and later, under the rule of the fanatic Almohades, the Jews had to choose between expulsion and forced conversion. Most of them submitted to conversion, being already as extensively assimilated as were the Hellenist Jews in the Alexandrian period, or as are the Western Jews of today. Many, however, preferred emigration and set out to look for another refuge. The international plot of our contemporary anti-Semites is leading to similar consequences. The Nazi Jew-baiters are worthy successors of Appion and Elviri. The assumption that in the twentieth century massacres and expulsions on a large scale would be impossible was an optimistic figment of liberals devoid of any historical foundation. The Arabs and Hellenists were not less civilized than the peoples of Western civilization. Recent events in Germany prove that what happened to the Jews in the Hellenistic and Arabian worlds is equally possible in the world of Western civilization. The persecutions inspired by the fanatic Nazis are of the same origin, character, and consequence as those of the fanatic Almohades and Appionites. In one respect, indeed, Western anti-Semites surpass even their prototypes of other civilizations in that they have invented a racial theory preventing the Jews from escaping into conversion. This is undoubtedly due to the intensity of economic rivalry in contemporary life.

The rapid growth of Zionism and the tremendous achievements of Jews in Palestine are chiefly due to these desperate economic conditions of World Jewry and consequent rise of modern anti-Semitism. Zionism of today has assumed vital importance because it is propelled not by abstract idealism, but by objective economic and so-

cial forces that are at work in Jewish life. Compared with the Biro-Bidjan scheme Zionism is much more justified by Reason. Within a *socialist* state the territorial segregation of Jews is artificial and reactionary, and, therefore, the Biro-Bidjan scheme was, from the outset, doomed to failure. Within the contemporary *capitalist* world, however, the creation of a Jewish National Home has become a vital necessity. To inmates of concentration camps and to masses of starving and persecuted people Palestine's upbuilding is today not a romantic, abstract ideal, but a matter of life and death. True, Zionism is beset with many difficulties and inconsistencies—the wavering and blundering policy of the British Empire in decline, Arab opposition inspired by European nationalism and using its slogans and methods, the interests of rival imperialist powers, the disintegration of Zionism itself reflecting the disruptive tendencies of Democracy in decay, and the civil strife among the Jews reminiscent of upheavals which followed the disintegration of Pharisaic democracy during the Roman period of Jewish history. But despite these difficulties, contradictions, and inconsistencies Zionism has, by force of circumstances, assumed a most vital significance in contemporary Jewish life and become the greatest Jewish mass movement of today. Its fate is unpredictable and depends on many factors over which Jews have no control. In the meantime, Zionism, nourished by national distress and despair, sets masses of Jews in motion and drives them into action in disregard of all obstacles.

A detailed analysis of spiritual tendencies within contemporary Judaism would require a book to itself. The references made in the chapter on Judaism and Alien Civilizations are, however, sufficient to the general morpho-

logical understanding also of phenomena of the contemporary period. Ignorance of things Jewish, decline of Hebrew poetry, philosophy, and literature, growth of ideological confusion and emergence of mystical movements, qualitative and quantitative decline of Jewish intellectual contributions to European civilization—are phenomena marking all corresponding periods of Jewish history. Morphologically the present crisis does not differ from those through which Jews passed in the orbit of the Hellenistic and Islamic civilizations. It is only more extensive because Western civilization has spread throughout the world and, consequently, conditions critical for the Jews are *everywhere* (excepting Russia) in process of formation. Not merely a section of Jewry in a particular land, but world Jewry as a whole, is exposed to the same influences.

During the first phase of assimilation, which concurs with the rise of revolutionary bourgeois, Jewish intellectual activity has evoked and grown more and more intensive. In the second phase, however, Jewish spiritual life has always declined in sympathy with the decline of alien civilizations in the orbit of which Jews have lived. Passing now through this second phase in which democracy disintegrates and Rationalism gives place to a variety of conflicting mystical movements, Western Jews exhibit tendencies analogous to those exhibited by their ancestors in the corresponding period of the Hellenistic and Islamic civilizations. Whether they will share the same ultimate fate as well, whether the persecution of the Jews and the decline of their intellectual activities will continue until all the remaining Jews are thrust back into the Ghetto and their mentality transforms itself in due course into that of Jewish Fellaheen or Ghetto Jews, or

whether persecutions and spiritual decline stop and, instead, a new order of things is established where Jews in common with other nations work for further progress of civilization—this again depends on what turn European civilization will take, a turn toward life or death.

. . . . .

In conclusion, Spengler enriched our knowledge of the laws governing human society, but he warns us against using this knowledge for the benefit of mankind. He denies us the capability of controlling and directing them. The fate that leads us to destruction and death is to him pre-determined and inescapable. On the other hand, Marx teaches us that modern human society will inevitably evolve a better order of things, that Capitalism is fated to die out and that Socialism will of inner necessity supersede it. The theories of both Spengler and Marx are deterministic, one essentially pessimistic and the second optimistic. Who is the true prophet? The answer to this question depends on whether or not there will arise a Power strong enough to control and rationally regulate the forces which are at work in contemporary civilized life.

Electricity may be either discharged in catastrophic explosions, or when intelligently controlled, generate heat and light and set industrial plants in motion. It is in a similar dilemma that mankind is placed today. Reason, controlling and directing the economic and social forces of human life, would prevent catastrophic explosions and bring light, warmth, and plenty to all humanity, including the Jews. Unreason, letting the dark forces loose, would spread hatred, misery, and ruin among all nations, and especially among the Jews. Tendencies towards both



destruction and intelligent reconstruction are clearly discernible, but thus far it is impossible to foretell with any certainty which will eventually prevail.

Fortunately it becomes increasingly evident that only when Reason triumphs, happiness and economic security can be achieved for mankind as a whole. All other attempts at resolving the monstrous contradictions from which nations suffer today are obviously doomed to failure. True, appeals to irrational sentiments in the name of conflicting mystical ideals are still successful. The Fourth Estate is still largely a fluctuating "seditious rabble" easily intimidated or misled by platform acrobats and all sorts of adventurers and charlatans; but in spite of the happenings in Germany, Italy, Spain, and many other countries there is still hope that under the guidance of determined and clear-sighted leaders, nations will re-shape their destiny in the light of Reason and thus the ideals of happiness, peace, and justice proclaimed by Israel's prophets 2,600 years ago will at last be translated into reality. Then and only then will Israel's fate find its fulfilment.

















Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01012 0428